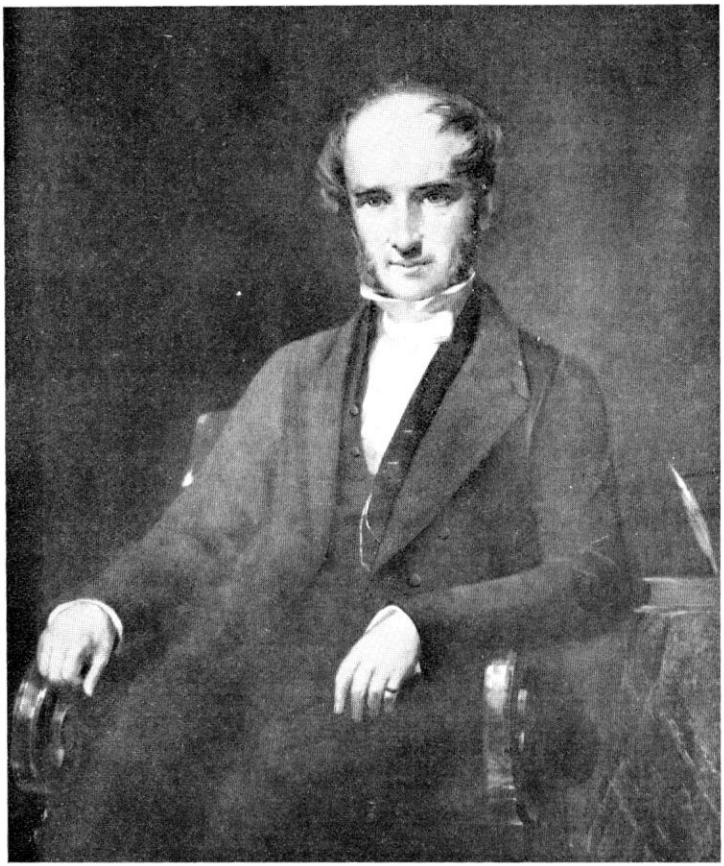

Rev. J. R. ANDERSON

LIFE and SERMONS

OF THE LATE

REV. J. R. ANDERSON,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, GLASGOW

1834—1859 A.D.

EDITED BY H. B. PITT, TROWBRIDGE.

"Importune Christ, be often at His gate; give His door no rest; I can tell you, He will be found."

Letter to Jean Gordon, March 13th, 1637.
—*S. Rutherford.*

The Holy Ghost will make the soul
Feel its sad condition;
For the sick, and not the whole,
Need the Good Physician.
—*J. Hart.*

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Portrait	
Preface	5
Sketch of Life	6
Appendix	27
Caithness (First Visit)	30
Caithness (Second Visit)	35
Rev. Peter McBride, Rothesay	47
The Door of Salvation. John x. 9	49
One Sacrifice for Sins. Hebrews x. 12-13	66
This is Life Eternal. John xvii. 3	82
The Spirit of Grace (1st Sermon). Zechariah xii. 10	96
The Spirit of Grace (2nd Sermon). Zechariah xii. 10	108
To Know More of Christ. Philippians iii. 12-14	118
Living on Christ. John vi. 57, l.c.	130
Preparation for Eternity. Matthew xxv. 31-46	149

Preface

THIS second volume of Sermons by the Rev. J. R. Anderson, follows a first which was published in 1934 and quickly sold out.

Advantage has been taken of this opportunity to give the reader a much fuller account of the life of Mr. Anderson, and to insert his portrait.

Mr. Anderson was called by Divine grace, afterwards to the Gospel ministry; raised up by God to do a great work in Scotland. For 25 years he laboured incessantly in preaching the Gospel in and from Glasgow in the South, to Caithness and Sutherland in the North. In Caithness (as hereafter fully related) he preached in a large tent, or in the open air, sometimes to 2,000 people. Mr. Anderson was a man of much private prayer, and from the secret chamber of Communion with God he received his ministerial message, and faithfully did he declare it. He believed that he had a message also for following generations of men, when truth should be scarce, and precious; and so also did some of his godly hearers who took down his sermons in shorthand.

These manuscripts, also Mr. Anderson's private diaries, and some previously published matter, are the materials from which this volume has been compiled. Rev. Anderson died in 1859. The links between 1859 and 1937 are as follows: In the year 1887 the writer came across an old magazine, the "Gospel Standard" for May, 1852, and read a very favourable review of Mr. Anderson's sermons by the late J. C. Philpot, Minister of the Gospel, Stamford. Since that date, but more especially from the year 1903, these sermons have been the means used for profitable spiritual teaching, and of direction to the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone Saviour of sinners. In April, 1908, the writer and another godly friend (happily still associated with us), were invited to attend a meeting in Glasgow, convened by some aged hearers of the late Rev. Anderson, to seek the Lord's guidance in connection with the future publication of his writings. The call, to help, came to us, and has since been lovingly rendered.

H. B. PITT.

Sketch of the Life of the late Rev. Jonathan Ranken Anderson

Minister of the Gospel, Glasgow

THE Rev. J. R. Anderson was born in the town of Paisley in the year 1803. His father, James Anderson, was a merchant of that town, and had a family of ten, Jonathan being the youngest. He died when this son was 11 years old. After Jonathan left school he served for some time in the Town Clerk's office at Dumbarton. At that period the Lord made use of a godly man—a Mr. M'Causlin, a Sabbath School teacher—as His messenger to young Mr. Anderson. This great change took place when he was 16 years of age. He was deeply convinced of his sinnership state before God by the Holy Spirit, and eventually, favoured by the same Divine Teacher with a faith's view of Jesus Christ crucified. That gospel deliverance, in which he sweetly realized the Atonement, is evidently comprehended in extracts from two of his sermons, preached many years after. "Faith looks to Jesus Christ as holding the office of a Saviour. Many of you say you have faith in Christ. Can you tell us anything about Him in whom you say you believe? Were your souls ever ready to sink into Hell? Did they ever stick fast in the miry clay of corruption? Were they ever tossed on the fiery sea of the Devil's temptations? Locked up in the prison of unbelief? Icebound by impenitence? Laid lower than the beasts with lusts? Tormented as though beset with devils? Did anyone ever come to

rescue you in that state? Who is He? Is He a Saviour? Mary saw the Lord; she could tell something about it. And so, the two disciples going to Emmaus. Can you this day condescend upon a single incident, even to the extent of the twinkling of an eye? Any condition of body or soul, in which you saw the Lord by faith? Can you tell what passed between Him and you?" Preached September 7th, 1851.

Extract from sermon 'Titus,' 3 chap., 4 to 7 verse. Preached June 28th, 1857:—

Know you the dark cloud that comes over the soul under a sense of being *lost*? Know you the cold shudder of death that steals upon the heart under a sense that you are lost? Know you the piercing anguish which uniformly strikes upon the spirit on the discovery that you are lost? And then ponder within your thoughts whether you have been saved. Know ye the gladsome feeling that arises in the heart from the dawning of the sweet light of salvation, delivering from the darkness of a lost state? Know ye the unspeakable joy of standing in nearness to God? Of being delivered from the horrible pit and miry clay of banishment from Him? Know ye the satisfaction of tasting that He is good, after being sick with the bitterness of His wrath? And then, to whom are you disposed and prepared to give the glory? Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy and truth's sake.

Immediately he had tasted that the Lord is gracious, he felt constrained to begin family worship in his lodgings. When the neighbours heard of this they expressed their desire to join him. We may be sure that it was a most difficult duty for a lad of sixteen years to begin worship with his neighbours, but their entreaties overcame all his objections. At a given sign they all came to his room for worship from time to time. In this way the Lord, whose ways are past finding out, began early to prepare this young man for his future work in the Lord's vineyard.

The Lord awakened an irresistible desire in his mind to go forth to preach the gospel. Like Isaiah of old, when his iniquity was purged, he heard the Lord's voice saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

Then said I, here am I, send me" (Is. 6, 8). He felt a burning impulse in his heart urging him to go to proclaim to his poor fellow-sinners the unsearchable riches of Christ. His heart yearned over them as he saw them unconcerned about their precious souls; for Eternity, God, the Judge of all, and heaven and hell were before his eyes night and day.

At this point the writer of these pages gives an extract from an address on the "Christian Ministry" by Mr. Anderson in 1846. "We call ourselves Ambassadors for Christ, but what title have we for this designation, unless we wait continually upon Him whose we are, and whom we serve. His service requires that we be in constant communication with Him. Of the Messiah, the divinely constituted model of ministers, it was predicted, 'He shall stand and feed in the strength of the majesty of the Lord his God.'

"The secret of Luther's strength and boldness at the Diet of Worms, and the spring of that eloquence which astonished the assembly, was the earnest cry which secretly rose from his heart, '*More light, Lord, more light.*'

"If we are to speak a word in season to him that is weary, we must pass through such afflictions as befal the People of God, and as meet them at every turn in the divine life. 'Thou hast brought us through fire and through water, into a wealthy place.' It was a well-known saying of Luther, that three things do make a minister, 'Meditation, supplication, and temptation.' A minister that is not habitually occupied with troubles—I mean particularly arising out of the possession and exercise of saving grace, and that life which grace constrains a man to seek in the ever-blessed God—is absolutely useless to the Church.

"The worthies of other days were men that had very solemn and abiding impressions of the eternal world, and gave a corresponding prominence to its interests in all their labours and conflicts. But how was this effected? Why, they were much alone. Luther spent daily three hours in prayer; Welsh of Ayr, eight hours; David Brainerd—every one knows what a wrestler he was; Hogg of Kiltearn, too, was mighty in this work.

Rowlands, the famous Welsh preacher, was seldom seen but in the pulpit. There he appeared as a visitor from another sphere, so heavenly his spirit, and burning his eloquence.

"A minister should be above the favour and the frown of men. He should take his character, his ease, his temporal support, and even his life into his hand, and throwing himself into the controversy between God and sinners, hold up the standard of truth, proclaiming the law, condemning sin, pronouncing woe upon transgressors; and preaching mercy and salvation in Christ Jesus, according to the Word of the truth of the Gospel. He may be sure that if some will, through grace, believe, some will believe not; nay, that some may depart contradicting and blaspheming. But he has received a solemn charge, and this he must fulfil, to publish the truth of God clearly and closely to the conscience, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear."

Mr. Anderson further remarked, of Henry Martyn it is said, "He desired to enter fully into the solemn spirit of these lines—

'I'd preach as though I ne'er should preach again;
I'd preach as dying unto dying men'."

In this frame of mind, he began to study so as to prepare himself for entering the University. After a time of hard work, in which he acquired the knowledge of most of the civilized languages, also Arabic, etc., he entered the University of Glasgow.

*It is recorded of him, that in all his classes he took a prominent place. As is often the case with profound and accurate thinkers, he took honours in Metaphysics and Mathematics. Having finished his Arts course, he entered the Divinity classes. He took a distinguished place in all his classes there, and finished his course of studies with the reputation of being a young man noted for his piety, ability and learning.

In due time, he was licensed to preach the gospel. With much fear and trembling, he began to preach as opportunities presented themselves. He determined, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, not to know anything among his hearers, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. So satisfied were the Lords people that he

* "Life and Diary," by Rev. Neil Cameron.

was the Lord's messenger to their souls, that nine of the leading godly elders of several congregations of the Established Church of Scotland in Glasgow presented him with a Testimonial of their appreciation of his preaching and personal worth. It reads as follows:—

"We, the undersigned, being ordained Elders of the Established Church in Glasgow, from our intimate acquaintance with, and esteem for, the Rev. Jonathan Ranken Anderson, Preacher of the gospel, desire to bear the following testimony to his character.

"We believe him to be a man of God; possessed of the Spirit of Christ, and having it as his supreme desire to glorify his Master, and to do His work in the ministry of the gospel.

"We have the most perfect confidence in his integrity and uprightness, in the sincerity of his heart, and the soundness of his religious principles.

"His conduct has, to our knowledge, been every way consistent with his profession—his conversation being such as becometh a minister of the gospel.

"In respect of his ministerial qualifications, it is our firm persuasion, from what we have seen and heard, that he has not run unsent as a minister of heaven. His public discourses clearly indicate the possession of gifts fitted for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. In knowledge, in utterance, in aptness to teach, in faithful application of the truth, whether for the purpose of conviction or comfort, in acquaintance with the mysteries of the kingdom, in the power of bringing forth from the treasures things new and old, to illustrate and enforce every subject, in devoted attachment (we may add in these days of division and hostility to religious Establishment) to the principles and standards of the Church of Scotland, Mr. Anderson, we consider, as well qualified to minister a word in season to every man, and to occupy with honour and usefulness a station as one of the watchmen on the wall of our Zion. For these reasons we subscribe our names to this paper, heartily praying the Lord of the harvest to send forth many such labourers into His harvest."

This statement was made by these godly men on the 26th day of February, 1834, a few months before Mr. Anderson was called to become Pastor of Kirkfield Chapel of Ease, Gorbals, Glasgow. On the 26th day of June in the same year, a call was presented to Mr. Anderson, signed by seventeen; the signatories being the proprietors and managers of the Chapel.

"We, the Proprietors and Managers of the Chapel of Ease in Gorbals, considering that there is a vacancy in the office of the ministry in the said chapel . . . and being well informed of the piety, prudence and good qualifications of you, Mr. Jonathan Ranken Anderson, for the ministry, therefore, we Invite, Call, and Intreat you, to supply the vacancy in the office of the ministry in this Chapel. Earnestly beseeching you to accept of this, our Call, to come and labour among us in the work of the ministry; promising hereby all subjection in the Lord to your ministry, and all due encouragement from us. In testimony whereof we have subscribed these presents at the said Chapel on the 26th day of June, 1834."

Mr. Anderson, after he had seriously and prayerfully considered this Call, accepted it.

His first sermon was preached in the Chapel on the 27th day of July, 1834. The text was: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3, 8).

The years 1839 and 1840 was a season of remarkable revival granted to his congregation.

*One of Mr. Anderson's Elders afterwards wrote of this time, "It is manifest that in the sermons preached during this period there was a special unction given by the Lord to His faithful servant for the awakening of poor sinners; there was a copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit, multitudes were pricked in their heart; some were constrained to cry out under soul trouble with audible voice, and good evidences were given, that many were brought under a work of conviction, which issued in their saving conversion to God and His Christ." The following obituary is one instance of this.

*Written by one of his Elders.

Extract from "Gospel Standard," 1891. Neil Lamont: On February 1st, 1891, at Komoka, a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, Lobo, Ontario. He was born in Scotland in 1813, and was almost 78 years of age when he died. About the year 1840 he was called by grace in Glasgow, under the ministry of Jonathan Anderson, a godly Presbyterian minister, of whom he always spoke with deep affection. While in Scotland, he became acquainted with the writings of J. C. Philpot and Wm. Gadsby. He was also very fond of the Works of Huntington, Berridge, Flavel, as well as the Scotch Covenanters. He was truly a godly man; his mind was wholly inclined towards spiritual things; so much so that he gave but little attention to other matters. He knew well what is meant by being sealed wih the Holy Spirit of Promise, and the difference between receiving the Word as Spirit and Life from the mere letter. He had many days of darkness, mourning over his own inbred sin and corruption and the absence of his Lord, and also glimpses of the Sun of Righteousness, when the promises of the Gospel were applied with sweetness, power, and comfort to his soul. On the Sabbath of his death there was no service in the Church, and he visited a friend for reading and Christian conversation. On leaving the latter, as he was crossing the railway, he was struck and instantly killed by an express train. Thus suddenly, was he taken from this dark earth to be forever with the Lord. H. McColl.

The following sermons in this volume were preached at this memorable time: "Life Eternal," from John xvii, 3; also two sermons, "The Spirit of Grace," from Zech. xii, 10.

The Rev. Anderson held firmly the doctrines and principles of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland. This caused him to identify himself with the evangelical party, who contended against Erastianism in the Church, and for the Church's independence in spiritual matters. On account of his love to sound doctrines and principles, he left the communion of the Erastian party, along with many others, in 1843. This step, taken for truth and conscience' sake, caused that he, and his devoted congregation, had to vacate the Kirkfield Chapel. They

were not, however, discouraged in the least, but took steps at once to build another place of worship where they and their beloved Pastor could worship God in accordance with His word and their own conscience. So Free John Knox's was set up. In it he continued to preach to his congregation with much acceptance until the year 1852. That year he separated, along with many of his congregation, from the Free Church. For many years previous Mr. Anderson had been deeply exercised at the growing worldliness in the professing Church in Scotland, and also that numbers were satisfied with only a *profession* of Truth. Against these things by word and pen he testified faithfully, and contended for a *living, vital,* and *saving* knowledge of Jesus Christ by His merits and sacrifice for sins; and as a consequence a separation in spirit and practice from unscriptural things. Many were offended at his faithful testimony, but God owned it by giving him many seals to his ministry. From introductory essay to Shepherd's "Spiritual Experiences," February, 1847, we give an extract illustrating Mr. Anderson's scriptural views: "There is a religion of nature. Let men beware lest they be found 'feeding upon ashes; a deceived heart having turned them aside, so that they cannot deliver their souls nor say, Is there not a lie in our right hand? We are entering upon a fiery trial, which shall test to the uttermost every man's religion of what sort it is; and only that which is of Divine origin, which bears the marks of His workmanship, who made the heavens and the earth, which manifests itself to be the fruit of 'the law-fulfilling righteousness, and sin-atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ,' which has affixed to it the seal of the living God, even the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of the saint's inheritance; only such a religion shall be approved and preserved amidst the troubles that tend to sap its foundations and overwhelm it in destruction, and be owned at last by the Judge in the day in which He maketh up His Jewels. But of all other kinds of religion, be they what they may, though established by the clearest reasoning, adorned by the most splendid eloquence, supported by the highest names, and recommended by the voice of a united people,

the word that is written shall be made good in its season; 'reprobate silver shall men call them'."

Extract from Diary, 22nd January, 1851.—"A very precious day. A number of solemn melting blinks. I desired to walk softly with Him—to occupy till He come—to sink self, and to bring Him prominently into view. But with such a volatile nature as I have, and withal so rugged, it is not easy. I visited a friend, desiring to have my eye single, and had a blink such as we have not had for a very long time. I had all the feelings of a revived season.

"The class very crowded. I was put into great darkness and deep distress before, and knew not how I was to get through the prayers. But such a night! The light very, very sweet, and at times so insinuating and powerful that many were affected. I said to my wife when I came home, 'If *this* is the fruit of our troubles we may well glory in them'."

16th October, 1851.—"The trials through which I pass point to a closer and closer conformity to the Master, and surely I may count it an honour to suffer with Him."

17th October, 1851.—"I was told of a remarkable case of a young man that had been awakened under a sermon I preached in Dr. W's. church, and died shortly after giving satisfactory evidence of knowing the truth . . . I really wonder at what appears to be going forward, amidst the fears and troubles that surround me on every side."

The immediate cause of Mr. Anderson's separation from the Free Church was a sermon preached in Hope Street Gaelic Church on Sabbath evening, November 23rd, 1851, from 2 Thess. ii, 11, 12, which gave great offence to some, but was much approved by others. The Preface to this sermon is appended.

"The times in which we live are awfully portentous. The kingdoms of the earth are rocking like a ship in a violent storm, and all sorts of opinions are struggling like the winds on the surface of the sea. Every institution, however venerable and stable, is subjected to a severe scrutiny. Principles that had long been thought firmly established, are opened up anew and thoroughly investigated; and change seems to be written

on everything earthly. It is, at any time, a hard matter to obtain salvation; but it is peculiarly hard in times like these. Men are exposed to very subtle and powerful temptations. A strong and rapid tide of corruption is sweeping through the land; and, on every side, it is shaking some that bade fair to outlive every contest, and actually overthrowing others that seemed to be most stable. But men stand exposed to a danger greater than any of these; and to this danger the apostle points the attention of the Thessalonians in the words of the text."

The following is an extract from the sermon referred to:—

"Some say, that there never was a more joyous time in the Church than at present. It is a rare thing to meet with any poor sinner burdened, as Bunyan represents Christian when leaving the City of Destruction, lamenting his state of spiritual destitution. Where do you find any poor creature wallowing in the Slough of Despond? Does any cry for help reach your ear, and would you not be apt to set the man down as not in his right mind who uttered it? Where will you find professed Christians mourning after an absent Lord—going to the word of God for comfort—going, as it were, to the sepulchre of Christ—looking into an empty text, an empty sermon, an empty ordinance— and saying, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him'? Where will you find people on the way to Zion, weeping as they go, and their faces Zionward? My friends, the people that go to places of worship are, for the most part, pleased with themselves, and pleased with all around. The Church is to a great extent at her ease. There prevails great levity, carnal joy, and a certain buoyancy of spirit, because the soul has nothing laid upon it but sheer vanity; and people will not believe but that all this arises from the knowledge and belief of the truth. What if it shall turn out that, under the influence of strong delusion, many of them are believing a lie, because they have not believed the truth, but have had pleasure in unrighteousness!" This sermon was printed in book form the same year.

*After Mr. Anderson's secession from the Free Church

he preached in the Railway Hall. Then in 1855 a neat Church was erected by the voluntary contributions of his own congregation, without resorting to any worldly means of raising money. There until his death, his congregation, with over 200 communicants, worshipped, cheered and encouraged by others in Aberdeenshire, Perthshire, Stirlingshire, Galloway, Caithness, and other parts of the country, who likewise prized Mr. Anderson's ministry, and as often as possible united with them in the observance of Divine worship.

In this place he laboured with much acceptance to the end of his life.

Now follow various Extracts from Mr. Anderson's diary:—

20th July, 1852.—Inverness.—"We reached this place soon after three o'clock. I was eager to be alone, and at last found a corner. But oh, the sweetness that poured in upon me. I tried to thank Him that He had brought me in safety, yet comfortably, and I was led to think of myself as one of the heirs with Christ of all things, and that all ministered to my comfort—the light offering me his light—the air its breezes—the mountains their rugged majesty—the fields their beauty and richness, and every creature in its own way promoting our comfort. I then thought of what it cost the dear Redeemer—gloom and bitterness, and sorrow—and death. I have to day felt as if I can love Him for what He is, whether He love *me* or not; but so that I must be dependent on Him to make known His love to me."

2nd January, 1853.—"The Tabernacle, Aberdeen. I had turned away from the text I thought of as beyond my strength: but I had to go back to it, and went for light to clear it up. I preached in a slow but solemn manner, and got through, but left very poor. The trouble, however, now began to rise like a tide, and I was at my wit's end. I cried, but no help. I thought of the promise, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble,' etc., but no rest. I was in despair, and wished I were some humble tradesman, or anything rather than a minister. I got through the first prayer with difficulty, and preached as I almost never did, in such terror and sadness, and at the close was full of anguish."

Monday, 3rd January, 1853.—Mr. C—— called, and told me he could not sleep all night with joy at what he had heard last night, and any he had seen felt in much the same way—he had not heard the like of it! And I in such a wretched state—this is truly marvellous . . . . I heard from others, later, that last night was wonderful, and poor me in such a plight. But what can I say!"

January 5th.—"I had a good night, and seemed to reap in a measure, the sorrows I had gone through on Sabbath—'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy'."

Extract from sermon preached October 20th, 1853:—

"When a student in this city I have seen Dr. Love preach to 30 persons in a Church seated for 1,300. The part of the Cathedral where Andrew Gray's youthful voice was heard commending Christ to his hearers, and where Robert Balfour, the friend and companion of Dr. Love, preached, that is now an ornament of the city. In Dr. Love's and Dr. Balfour's time these were the only places where the gospel was heard, and it was a standing reproach to people when they ventured to go there."

24th October, 1853.—"I was sorely shattered, and was hardly able to walk or speak, yet after breakfast revived a little. The text I had got was opened with much simplicity. In much compassion to my weakness I got the truth, but not the oppressive weight I had felt, and thus I was able to take and give instruction in a way that with the blessing may produce lasting profit. In coming out I saw a number of the people and each one seemed happier than another, yet I was glad to hear some say, 'We may look for broken bones for this.' To me it seems to have been a season such as we never had. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul'."

December 26th, 1853.—Diary.—"I was surprised at being asked by one of my deacons whether I would go out to Bothwell, and preach to infidels, if they got a place. I said, 'Oh yes.' I wonder if this be one of the ways in which I am to go out to the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in?"

A building was obtained and in response to the invitation Mr. Anderson attended and preached the

gospel to a crowded assembly. A friend informed me that a solemn awe fell upon them as the preacher announced the 50th Psalm, 21 to 23 verses, to be sung. (Editor).

These things thou wickedly hast done,
And I have silent been:
Thou thought'st that I was like thyself,
And did approve thy sin
But I will sharply thee reprove
And I will order right
Thy sins and thy transgressions in presence of thy sight.

April 3rd, 1854.—I had a young woman, the third time, apply for admission to the ordinance. I found her apparently in advance of her former state, but nothing so satisfactory as to warrant us in passing her. I tried to encourage her to seek the Lord, but she seemed bent on seeking His table. But the Communion Table is not the Saviour."

November 27th, 1854.—"I had one of the sweetest mornings, I almost ever had in my life. I seemed to breathe prayer; and though not very near I had a precious sense of the presence of God. Oh, what am I that He should so visit me? I saw, I should not stop at not offending, but aim at increasingly pleasing Him. I continued to breathe somewhat of the spirit of prayer all the day. I sought life from God, life with Him, life to Him."

May 16th, 1856.—"One of our young men called to arrange about his marriage with one of my class girls. The account he gave me was that before she came to the Tabernacle she attended no place of worship—was unable to read—and belonged to a family, the most of whom did not belong to any congregation. The first time she had heard the word preached was the day on which the Tabernacle was opened (in the year 1852), when her mind was impressed with the truth. She afterwards began to learn to read at home, under the care of a younger brother, also a member of my class. He told me a few little things that had occurred illustrative of her character—the purity of her principles—and the fruitfulness of her profession. In all this I saw fresh

cause to thank God and take courage. For how great has been the goodness which he has made to pass before us."

March 5th, 1857.—"I had a season in secret prayer this morning, which, perhaps, exceeded all I ever remembered to have enjoyed. I trust it was the spirit of adoption which guided me to so pour out my heart before the Hearer of prayer. I adored the triune Jehovah as my Father, my Sovereign, my Portion, my Alpha and Omega, and gave thanks for my creation by such a God, my preservation by such a Providence, and was pleased with the condition assigned to me, but did not care about anything except He does it and bears the glory."

March 10th, 1857.—"As I awoke my thoughts flowed freely upon the Christian life from the passage 'Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.' In the forenoon, I was admitted to the mercy seat, had the spirit of adoption, and was filled with tender emotion as I thought of the Holy One as my Father and me His son; my Friend and I knowing His mind; my Sovereign and I His servant; my Prince and I one of His ministers. I was raised sensibly above earthly things and was unspeakably blessed."

July 13th, 1857.—"I thought the ever-blessed Three held a Council in my soul, and I prayed they might fill it in all its corners, that I might reflect the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, and be employed for Him."

September 2nd, 1857.—"I tried to get near to Him who is the fountain of power, for I felt that without Him I can do nothing. But what a night! The truth was simple as the light, vast as the expanse of heaven, and glorious as the rainbow. My soul doth make her boast in God. Blessed he His name."

Sabbath, 12th July, 1857.—"This evening I went to see I.G., who is rapidly sinking under consumption. I was helped to simple views of truth suited to the capacity of a young person, and in keeping with her condition. I prayed shortly and bade her farewell. I was told afterwards that she had been brought under concern while hearing one of my Action Sermons, and

ever since has had something about her manner which her mother did not understand until now. I came away solemnised by the nearness of death, and encouraged by a hopeful instance of conversion to God."

July 27th, 1857.—"I tried by ejaculations to hold fellowship with the blessed God, and had a good many precious cogitations. Afterwards I had a season in prayer of deep and intense blessedness, and only grieved that I could not praise the Lord with greater ardour."

July 28th, 1857.—"The worship was simple and fragrant, and afterwards we had a short conversation on the future prospects of Messiah's Kingdom. What is this world without His cause? Nothing. What is the soul without Christ? A carcase.

July 29th, 1857.—"I went to bed last night in a calm and peaceful frame of mind—disposed to keep pleading for the triumph of Messiah over all opposition, and the extension of His Kingdom to the remotest part of the globe—to India, China, Tartary, and the tribes of Africa."

30th October, 1857.—"Visited old R.G. I talked to him about a religion of our own making or of minister's making, which is sure to be destroyed, and of that made by a Divine hand as the only one that will abide."

November 28th.—"I had a sting in my conscience, and felt as if shut out from child-like confidence in the Holy One of Israel, and friendly intercourse with Him. I asked how the sting was to be extracted, and my soul restored to its proper position and spiritual employment, and saw it was only by the blood of Christ. I was affected at the thought that I could be healed only by His stripes."

December 5th, 1857.—"I was set to study the subject of sermon to-morrow by the endurance of terrible things in righteousness, and drank very copiously the wine of astonishment. I was like a ship driven by fierce winds on a tempestuous sea, and often brought to my wit's end. I marvel why it is I have to pass through such fires. Is it to melt and refine me? I may well say unto God, 'How terrible art Thou in Thy works'."

December 12th, 1857.—" I was this morning in the enjoyment of unspeakable blessedness, and in secret prayer saw I should love God with all the heart, soul, strength and mind. I should know Him for He may be known: esteem Him for He is estimable: confide in Him for He is faithful: be zealous for Him for He is glorious. I further saw that I should occupy whatever talent I have till the Master come, and be always ready to arise and go hence."

December 20th, 1857.—" This has been one of the most blessed days of my life, both in private and public. I had freedom in approaching the Mercy-seat—sought to keep near to the Holy One, and to travail as in birth for the conversion of sinners. I had a third sermon on the parable of the Prodigal Son, and the light given on that exquisite picture of a penitent transgressor surpassed anything I had previously obtained. My soul was expanded and elevated by its influence and I rejoiced in the glory of the light. The congregation were evidently impressed, and one here and there I observed weeping. I was truly happy, yet feared the Lord and His goodness."

December 24th, 1857. Diary.—" When I awoke I found ready and delighted access to the Fountain of life, and thought I should live this day as though it were to be my last. The forenoon was unspeakably precious, and I was afraid of waking up or disturbing the Beloved of my soul. What am I that He should so visit? I went up to the West end to visit, and saw in one house three respectable women servants. The first conversed with came to the Tabernacle for good twelve months ago. She gave a sensible and apparently satisfactory account of the change, and seems to have some true light and heartfelt interest in divine things. The other two have been long with us. I was helped in speaking to them one by one, and then in praying shortly with the whole together."

For some considerable period before his last illness Mr. Anderson's health began to break, and on Sabbath night, 14th February, 1858, he began to spit blood, and was laid low for two or three weeks, with an attack of congestion of the lungs. By medical advice he was

placed on low diet, and afterwards wrote as follows as to his exercises during that season of affliction:—

"In the morning when my humble meal was brought in, and I rose in my bed to partake of it, I felt as if the temple of His mercy were opened to me, and like the Priests of old, I was allowed to eat my meat before Him. The riches of His mercy appeared to me very great, and I saw I was less than the least of them."

The following are extracts from "Pastoral letters" in his last days:—

"From my sick room, February 21st, 1858.

"My dear People,

"I have been on the brink of the eternal world and *now enjoy a peace which passeth understanding.* I am more than ever persuaded that, in the doctrine we hold, the discipline we exercise, and the testimony we bear against abounding iniquity, we are right. My heart is knit in cordial love to all who love the Lord Jesus, and hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering."

February 27th—"I am still kept under the rod, but find it good to be afflicted: 'For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.' . . . 'The Lord has allured me into the Wilderness, and spoken comfortably unto me. He hath also fed me with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock He hath satisfied me'."

May 15th, 1858.—"I am still favoured in my retirement with glimpses of His beauty, and solaced with tokens of His favour; and at times exclaim, 'How great is His goodness, how great is His beauty'."

Following are extracts from Mr. Anderson's published diary,* which will show that his faith in those doctrines of grace which had been the rule of his private life, and the theme of his public ministrations, did not fail him in the hour of trial; and remained unchanged on his nearest approaches to the eternal world.

January 30th, 1858.—"I begin to be troubled with hidden evils, such as vanity, self-seeking, and such like, and hope that the loathing they awaken is the precursor of their extermination. My soul went out freely and delightedly towards the blessed God, but I was tried as in a furnace. . . . I struggled for nearly two hours to

get rid of vanity, and rise to the holy place, and nearly despaired. But on kneeling down there opened to me things so glorious that I was humbled, and yet elevated; my soul was bowed down, yet I was wonderfully strengthened, and felt indeed as if that which a little before was a place of merchandise, became the temple of God. Who can utter all His praise, who deigns thus to visit the children of men? Oh, praise Him, ye heavenly hosts."

April 21st, 1858.—"I was taken into some very rich and elevated fields of truth, my mind was in perfect peace. I had a taste of full assurance, and did desire to depart and to be with Christ at that very moment."

July 16th, 1858.—"My soul rose sweetly to my great and unwearied Benefactor, and in the elder Brother, I was disposed to pour out my whole heart in gratitude and praise. I made mention of His goodness to me and mine in temporal things; but was able to put special value on spiritual blessings. I find it a blessed exercise to take the Saviour with me in all my ways before God, and try to learn the rare and difficult art of living by faith."

October 30th, 1858.—"I have seldom had a season equal to this forenoon. In prayer, I was helped, with some measure of childlike simplicity, to give myself up to the Father of All, and to hope that He takes me to be His, because He has redeemed me. I was composed, peaceful and satisfied; and had a holy fear of in any way offending Him.... My mind was constantly dwelling on Divine things. The spiritual world, and the laws which govern it, I saw, are well worth the most diligent study; for they as far exceed the physical sciences, as the heavens are higher than the earth. 'Oh how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day!'."

November 5th, 1858.—"I had a blessed morning; my soul rested with sensible delight on the words, 'where I am, there ye may be also.' . . .We are being taught that only what is real and vital in religion, will be allowed in the present day to stand, and that mere form will perish, or be vilely thrown away."

November 19th, 1858.—"My mind was in a happy frame, the understanding clear and active, and the

affections pure and elevated. I desired to walk in the light, as He is in the light. Natural men are without God in the world, I longed to walk with God. In prospect of family worship, I inquired, What is it? and saw that, as a minister of Christ, I am charged with it as a centre, and that from it there should radiate a holy influence throughout the day, and in every department of operation. Were families what they ought to be, each would bring his quota to it, and radiate from it to the Glory of God the Father."

November 19th was the last entry in his Diary.

In the foregoing Mr. Anderson sweetly realized what he had written on September 24th of the "Loves of Christ" which He gives to His people"—"Pastoral letters."

He wrote, "The last occasion on which Christ gives to His own His loves, is when He is about to take them to Himself, that where He is, there they may be also. As they draw near their end, they oftentimes become ripe in understanding, and mellow with experience; and deep and large are the draughts which they are privileged to take of Christ's loves."

Now follows extracts from the last sermon Mr. Anderson preached, 5th December, 1858, from Acts 2,49, "And the Lord added to the Church daily *such as should be saved!*"

"But how does the Lord find such as should be saved, that they may be added to the Church? If we could seize upon all those in our congregation that are amongst the saved, and ask them, one by one, How wert thou found, thou that art amongst the saved, to be added to the Church? Didst thou find thyself? Oh no! 'I went astray like a lost sheep. I never would have found my way back to the fold.' Did any of thy fellows find thee? Some one may have been instrumental, but nothing more. Each one would be constrained to say, 'It is the Good Shepherd only, who gave His life for the sheep, and who goes in quest of those who are astray, that could bring any back from their wanderings.' 'Seek, thy servant, and find him!'

"Now, my friends, have you been added to the Church? And have you been added to the Church in

the way in which those who are among the saved are added? Is there in your souls a breaking up of the old spirit of legality? Have you found the sentence of death in yourselves, and learned not to trust in yourselves, but in the Living God, who quickeneth the dead, that you may be saved?

"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." We may say that all who are added to the Church, by the Lord, of such as should be saved, are in deaths oft; because they are to have an increase of life; and every augmentation to their life is preceded by another death blow. They die to the law, and live to Christ; they die to sin, and live to God; they die to self, and live to His praise; they die daily unto sin, and live unto righteousness. Now, is this *double process* going on in your souls? If not, how can you make it out that the Lord has added you to His Church?

"No additions are made by the Lord to His Church, but from amongst those that are *lost*. The saved are taken from the lost. If you are not *lost* men and women, you will never be saved. If you never were *slain* by the law you have never been made *alive* unto God. If you have not been broken off from Adam the first, you are not joined to Adam the second. If you never do business in the deep waters of hell, you will never taste the sweetness of heaven.

"The Lord added to His Church *daily* such as should be saved. The holy fire that was kindled at Jerusalem, was spreading and enwrapping this one, and that one, and the other one—sometimes three thousand souls in one day, in its blessed influences. He girded His sword upon His thigh, with His glory and with His majesty, and let His glory appear; He mounted the white horse of the glorious gospel, and with His bow in His hand rode forth conquering and to conquer. And what a conquest! A conquest of mercy, of grace, of power, of life, of salvation. The Lord added to the Church: taking from the heap of the ruined and adding to the mass of the saved; thinning the ranks of darkness, and increasing the hosts of light. He took the prey from the mighty, and delivered the lawful captive; He caused

Satan to fall as lightning from heaven, and gathered from his kingdom ever growing trophies to the praise of His name. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. 'Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come and save us!'

"Be it that the Church is formed, we learn, *secondly*, how additions are to be made to it. Suppose, my friends, that we have not more than two or three. 'What do you mean by two or three?' Two or three people of prayer; two or three walking humbly with God; two or three people whose word may be depended upon as firmly as their oath; who speak the truth; who deal honestly; who keep their promises; do wrong to no man; guide their affairs with discretion and seek to adorn the doctrine of God the Saviour in all things, by a life and conversation becoming the gospel. Let us have two or three of that sort, and the Lord may add, and may add daily to this little Church. Of whom? Of such as shall be saved. This is something worth the seeking. For this, we may preach, and people may pray. And what do you say? Oh that I may be added—and I,—and I,—and I!"

His public ministry of 25 years was finished. He had greatly honoured the Triune God in it, and God highly honoured him by giving him a great number of seals to his ministry from all parts of Scotland.

After December 5th he became very feeble and his eyesight failed. To any of his congregation who called, he would say a few words, and tell them he had delivered his message, and add, "By the grace of God I am what I am." After a period of intense suffering he gave a great shout of triumph and passed away, to be for ever with the Lord, on the 10th day of January, 1859, at the age of 56 years. His remains were laid to rest by his devoted Church and congregation on the 15th day of that month. A great number of the citizens of Glasgow also attended, to shew their last respects to one who had so long lived an eminently godly life in their midst.

Appendix

Mr. Anderson was twice married. His first wife was Miss Martha Freer, daughter of William Leacroft Freer, surgeon, Stourbridge, Worcestershire. They had nine children.

Appended is a short account of her triumphant death as extracted from two letters of his, February 14th, 1847:—"My beloved wife is a little easier to-day, but she is still in a very critical state. I was by her bedside to-day about one o'clock, and as my hand rested on her rapid pulse, she spoke of a separation which I thought certain, and not far distant. My heart was ready to burst, and yet I was calm, and not unhappy. She was gentle and resigned, and spoke of some Scriptures that she had been thinking on, and showed that her heart was, I hope, in the right place. I was at times intensely happy in the prospect of the solemn scenes to which I looked forward, and again I was wrapped in clouds of sorrow, still relieved by the light of hope. I have often tried my religion in deep waters, and found the anchor sure and stedfast: but I never encountered a storm such as now sweeps over me, and yet I can say, 'It is well.' Oh, what a dreary universe were this to my soul without God, the God of Salvation! He lets me speak to Him, and plead with Him, and gives me cordials for my fainting heart!" 8th March, 1847:—"God has in many ways been very gracious to me, and not least in the solemn scene which closed the earthly course of my beloved wife. She had been in great darkness and trouble the whole of the previous night, and the day

that followed, up till within an hour of her death. She asked the eight Psalm to be read, and then exclaimed: 'His name is excellent in all the earth.' I repeated some Scriptures, and amongst others that in Isaiah, 'Fear not, for I am with thee,' when she said, 'That will do; do not leave me any more.' She next requested me to sing or repeat the 24th Psalm. I was too sad to sing, but I began to repeat, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,' when she said, 'That is not it.' I remembered some delightful views she had had on the latter verses, and therefore said, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!' when she said, 'That is it.' When I finished she said with great emphasis, 'Now I know He gives great deliverance.' She said in a little after, 'He is here: He is come to take me to Himself: I stand ready to receive Him.' I went on with my passages of the Word, though little able for the task, and again she said, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' In a few minutes the darkness of death seemed to come over her eyes, and she called for more light, but though it was brought she took no notice of it, and at nine o'clock, the last long inspiration was drawn, and all was still and motionless. Oh, who can tell the anguish of that hour, and yet I could not but say, 'It is well.' The Lord has dealt bountifully in the midst of all my griefs, and at times I have felt happy in Him. My friends are in Heaven, my possessions are there; my home is there; I am but a stranger here, and I feel as if everything around me were strange to me. I almost count the days and hours that pass, and hope to welcome the end, that I may rest."

His second marriage was to Miss Ann Alison of Leith, on 16th May, 1848. There were no children of this marriage.

The following appreciation of Rev. Jonathan Ranken Anderson, of Glasgow, by the late J. C. Philpot, minister of the Gospel, Stamford, Lincolnshire, which appeared in the "Gospel Standard" of May, 1852, is here inserted.

"Mr. Anderson is much prized by the few in Scotland who value experimental preaching, a thing in the land of Rutherford now hardly known by name. He is

evidently a man of considerable ability, much improved by that laborious system of education through which every Scotch ordained Minister must pass. He therefore writes with great fluency, and often with great energy and strength. Indeed, we have not many preachers in England professing truth who handle a subject so ably, and enforce their views with so much closeness and earnestness. His eyes have been opened clearly to see the nature of that dead profession which hangs over Scotland like a funeral pall. This, therefore, he exposes and denounces with much warmth and energy. He is evidently one also who has felt the terrors of the law, and the promises and consolations of the Gospel. Upon all these subjects he writes well, as one who feels their weight and importance. Mr. Anderson is, we understand, disliked and persecuted by his ministerial brethren, and has been more than once summoned before the Presbytery, and reproved by them for his faithful testimony. There is much that is valuable in his writings. The Scots are a well-educated people, and accustomed to elaborate sermons of a certain amount of intellectual reasoning. For them Mr. Anderson is well adapted, especially in a City like Glasgow, where he would have many educated hearers. He is a man, we understand, of eminently consistent life and prayerful habits, adorning the Gospel that he preaches. We therefore conclude by wishing him well in the name of the Lord, as what we have heard of him from private sources leads us to esteem him highly in love for his work's sake."

A son of Rev. J. R. Anderson considered his father to be the spiritual successor of Thomas Boston of Ettrick, and James Renwick the Covenanter.

Caithness.

An account of Rev. J. R. Anderson's preaching tour in this County.

July and September, 1854.

Sabbath, 16th July, 1854.

Wick: I was in a peculiarly solemn frame this morning when I awoke, and felt as if the Holy One were so near that I could hardly bear his presence. I was besides ready to faint at the prospect of my work in this place. For I was a stranger,—and knew hardly any of the people—and knew not who or what sort of persons might come to hear the word. I was somewhat relieved when I was told, after breakfast, that Mr. G. from Lybster was come, and had called for me. I ran downstairs, and found a remarkable person of eighty years of age, of a sweet and noble expression, or portly bearing, and lively manner. We walked together to the Temperance Hall where I was to preach. We had large congregations: the truth was laid plentifully to my hands, and I felt as in a kindly atmosphere. In the last prayer in the afternoon I was drawn out to plead for the blessing in a way unusual, and do trust good was done. But the day will declare. I walked home with Mr. G., and his son, both of whom appeared to have been much interested. I was afraid of offending, and took heed to keep sober, and when I got to the Hotel kneeled down, and tried to commit His word to Himself. I was brought low, and sorely emptied, yet had a large meeting at worship, and got the use of a commodious room in the Inn. The truth was very remarkable, but before I had spoken an hour I was exhausted, and had speedily to come to a close. I had a quiet, and happy evening afterwards, and free from excitement.

Tuesday, 18th July, 1854.

Thurso: I rose to breakfast, but was too ill to have worship. I offered a short prayer with our party before we started, and at 11 o'clock we left Wick, and came to this place. I revived as we drove along, and had now and then a thought that interested me: but I had cause to mourn that my soul cleaved to the dust. We reached this place at two o'clock, and I hastened to render thanks for the goodness that had been shewn to me: and pleaded for the unction which will prepare me to preach. The Parish School was got to meet in. I was in great straits about the Meeting—pressed out of measure, so as almost to despair of life. The room was crowded, and some standing on the outside. I had a good deal of liberty, and yet something said it was a testimony against this generation. I was in a measure happy, and was led to bring out what I trust was suitable to individual cases. The worship was very precious, and I retired to my room, and read the word, and reviewed the day, and prayed.

Wednesday, 19th July, 1854.

Wick: I was unwell this morning, and afraid I was to be laid up: but at last I got up, and after pleading for mercy, and giving thanks, I had worship. We left Thurso at five o'clock for Castletown, which we reached before six o'clock. The Parish School was crowded to excess, and nearly as many outside. I had nothing for it but to preach in the open air, which I did with a comfort and freedom which surprised me. The people came about me in groups, and a strong desire was expressed that I should come back and preach. I said I would keep the matter before my mind, and on considering it I thought we might return on Friday. We left a little before nine o'clock, and were home at eleven. We knelt down and returned thanks for all the mercy shewn to us.

Thursday, 20th July, 1854.

Wick: I slept well, and awoke at a late hour sensibly refreshed. I had some little strength, and nearness, in prayer, both in secret, and in the family: but was afterwards feeble and depressed, and my heart ready to sink. I returned to the Inn, and read part of Sibbs' "Soul

Conflict" with wonder. The depth of that book is truly remarkable. In the evening I preached in the Temperance Hall to a large congregation. The truth was abundant, and at times came in close, and solemn appeals: but what is to be the result who can tell! I may be led about in these parts as a savour of life unto life to a few, and of death unto death to many: and who is sufficient for these things.

Friday, 21st July, 1854.

Wick: In the morning I was assailed with vain thoughts, but in His fear I sought to please Him, and withstand, and cast them out, and in this had a precious exercise. But I needed to watch so as not to glory, and to fall in self confidence. I had a nice time in secret, and soon after eleven we set out to Castletown. I was mercifully dealt with all the way, and still more after I reached the place. For though I conversed freely with friends, my mind was stayed, and I sought His presence, and power in the preaching of the word. I went to the place where a tent was erected, and found about twelve or fourteen hundred people assembled. The stillness was most marked—the attention sustained, and considerable light and freedom in handling the truth. Oh, that He who has the residue of the spirit would grant a copious effusion of Him to the praise of His glory. We left Castletown at nine o'clock, and drove into Wick. The night was very pleasant,—the air fresh and balmy. I had a number of precious blinks, and sought again and again to commit the word of the Kingdom to Him whose it is, and of whom it testifies. We arrived at half-past eleven, and I prayed shortly with friends, and felt it unspeakably precious.

Saturday, 22nd July, 1854.

Dunbeath: I had a messenger of Satan last night sent to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure, and was enabled quietly to submit to the stroke, and so felt it light, and easily borne. I slept soundly, and rose this morning wonderfully well. We left Wick between eleven and twelve o'clock, and drove to this place. I was very fagged, yet had some good thoughts, and seemed to have the texts given me from which I am to preach to-morrow. We saw at Lybster, as we

passed, an old servant who was overjoyed to see us again. We walked about till the horses were fed, and then came on to this place, and put up at a small country Inn—just like a public house. The accommodation was limited, and very rude, and I longed to be alone, which for some time I could not be, but at last I got it, and sought to pour out my heart before Him who preserves our going out, and coming in. The worship was peculiarly close and weighty. I was afraid of losing the impression, but it is hard unless you had around you such as would fan the flame. I walked outside the Inn a little way, and had some breathing of soul after God, and His presence in the means in the coming day. Oh, that He would rend the heavens, and come down.

Sabbath, 23rd July, 1854.

Dunbeath: I passed a sad night—full of tossings to and fro, and hearing the clock strike almost every hour. I was afraid I would be too shattered for work, but I had abundant cause to sing of mercy. The people began to assemble around the tent at eleven o'clock, and at half past eleven I began the service. I computed there could not be much fewer than fifteen hundred people. I was afraid they were too many for any work to be done: but my fears were to some extent disappointed. I preached upwards of two hours, and yet only touched the margin of the subject, and the people were wonderfully attentive, and at times some were moved. The rain began to fall, and I hastened to close for the day: but the rain went off, and I was strongly urged to resume after an interval. I, therefore, named half-an-hour, and came up to the Inn, and prayed, and had a little refreshment, and rested, and then went down. I think I had even more liberty than I had in the forenoon. The subject opened simply, and nicely to me, and the appeals to the conscience occurred now and again. But after all I feel I get most when I handle truths of another kind, yet what am I that I should be helped to speak what seems suitable to a rude people. I was peaceful, and happy, after dinner, yet had a void which I longed to fill, and hoped that at worship I might get something to my own soul. Nor was I disappointed.

We had nearly a hundred, and I sat near the window, and spoke so as to be heard by all inside and outside. I felt it a good time, and was glad of the word that was laid to my hand. What shall I render to the Lord, for all His gifts to me?

Monday, 24th July, 1854.

Wick: I had another bad night. I was, however, pretty well when I arose, and had some freedom of access, both in secret, and with our circle as a family. We left Dunbeath at eleven o'clock. We arrived here about three o'clock. I hastened to my room, and gave thanks for all the goodness we have experienced, and tried to plead for fruit from His own word. We dined quietly, and then walked out, and saw the fishing boats out at sea, and moving from the harbour—a very lovely sight.

Tuesday, 25th July, 1854.

A friend from Roster came in, and with him J.S. who precented at Dunbeath. I got a hearty welcome from both. We had a little exercise before we parted, and sang, and read, and prayed. I had some things savoury laid to my hand. We then went up to see Mrs. S.—a young widow sinking under consumption. I was much pleased with her intelligence and decision.

Glasgow, 31st July. Church.

I gave a brief account of my visit to Caithness which was listened to with breathless attention. I was desirous that it should be to His praise, but towards the close I was straightened, and thus humbled. I am nothing, and but for mercy must perish.

Second visit to Caithness

Saturday, 18th August, 1854.

I have letters to-day from Caithness expressive of a strong, and as is represented a universal, desire that I should visit that part of the country before the winter. I desire to do whatever appears to be the Master's will. I cannot say Nay, and yet what to do I hardly am able to tell.

Sabbath, 19th August, 1854.

I saw two of my Elders, and consulted them about another visit to Caithness, and was encouraged to entertain the purpose as apparently of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His Will. I had a stirring letter from Lybster, also calling upon me to return. But still I desire to wait for God, and to hope in His Word. Oh, that He would be the breaker up of my way, and go with me. For if He be for me, who can be against me?

Tuesday, 5th September, 1854.

Castletown: I had a disturbed night, and sleep very broken, but not from the steamer, for it was very quiet, nor from my berth for it was very comfortable. I rose about eight o'clock, and as soon as I was dressed knelt down, and gave thanks for His mercy. I then had worship as usual, and found the benefit of it. We had a small company at breakfast. I asked a blessing, and felt at my ease in it, but was unable to unite with any in profitable conversation. I want tact, and zeal, and life. Oh, to be sanctified, and made meet for the Master's use, and prepared for every good work. We had a very pleasant voyage to Wick, and arrived there at one o'clock. We had fearful tossings in the Pentland Firth, and did not get to Scrabster till eight o'clock.

Wednesday, 6th September, 1854.

Castletown: I slept soundly, and did not awake till about seven o'clock. My first thoughts were attended with a holy calm and a sense of great nearness to Him who loveth. I feared under it, but it did not last long. I had afterwards some interesting views of the Christian armour, and the duty of putting it on habitually by praying always, and saw I have been very neglectful in this matter. The worship in the family was simple, and accompanied with a little savour. The weather is quite changed, and well it is I am here, and not on the sea. I had a pretty quiet and happy forenoon: and between two and three o'clock, three men came down to ask me to come to their prayer meeting—not aware I was to preach at Thurso. The rain continued to fall fast and thick, and the wind was high: nevertheless, I set out in a gig for Thurso, and arrived there at half past five. I was severely tried by my text, and was afraid it might be presumption to meddle with such a subject. I preached in the Parish Schoolroom to about two hundred people, and though it was very wet some were outside. The solemnity was quite marked, and perhaps good was done. But, oh, that He would make bare His holy arm, and give testimony to the word of His grace. I got safely home, and was happy.

Thursday, 7th September, 1854.

Castletown: When I awoke I was unable to get sensible access in secret, but in the worship I felt the psalm sung agreeable to my taste. Afterwards had some pleasant meditations, and seemed to get a text for the meeting here this evening. I walked out at one o'clock, and was relieved and invigorated by the fresh air, and mused as I strolled about on my work, and the result of my visit to this place. At tea I was greatly enlivened by the company of two godly old men who had come to the meeting. I then went to my room, and pleaded for the unction to be upon me, and power with the word. The weather had cleared up, and a little before six o'clock I went out to the tent which had been set in the quarry. We had a congregation of at least twelve hundred people—most of them men. I was

sensibly helped in every part of the service, and thought it was a solemn night, but, oh, that the arm of the Lord were revealed! then surely would our report be believed. I prayed for the blessing to myself and others when I came home, and had breathings of soul afterwards. The worship was simple, and weighty, and I felt it good to be there. I must wait still upon Him for the power.

Friday, 8th September, 1854.

Castletown: I had sensible nearness in secret this morning, and felt, as it were, a growing familiarity with the Holy One, and trust it may be from the spirit of adoption. I felt the worship very precious. The forenoon was occupied in praying, reading the Hebrew Bible, writing letters, etc. I went to see a woman in the village, who had just heard of the death of a brother. I had much freedom in speaking to her. In the afternoon I walked along the shore, and returned by the pavement works, when one man came and kindly shewed me a machine they have for cutting and polishing. I got into conversation with him, and in a little another joined us, and another, till I had a circle of workmen with earnest and intelligent faces listening to what I said. I commended the word as our only guide, and anchorage.

Saturday, 9th September, 1854.

Castletown: I did not get to bed last night till after twelve o'clock, yet I slept pretty well, and awoke refreshed. I had freedom in secret prayer, and also in family worship. I went upstairs, and sought the spirit of prayer in view of my work here tomorrow. I read a Hebrew Psalm, and rested on the expressions with interest and wonder. I walked out at one o'clock to survey ground for the tent tomorrow. The fields looked like a sea of gold—so rich with the harvest. How great is His goodness to sinful creatures. We dined at three o'clock, and after resting a while I strolled along the shore, musing on the passage which has repeatedly been before my mind—"I would fill my mouth with arguments." I thought I should plead on the model of the advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the Righteous, and put the question how he carries on His advocacy.

I saw that He eyes chiefly the glory of the Father, and, therefore, if I would plead in His name, I must do so too. Oh, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost that my heart may be right with God, and that I may lay myself out for Him. In the evening I had several seasons of prayer, and was drawn out in fellowship such as I never remember to have had before. I wonder what He will do with me tomorrow! I am weak, extremely weak, and need His strong hand to make help for me.

Sabbath, 10th September, 1854.

Castletown: I awoke this morning pretty early, and did not sleep again. I had lost a sense of His presence, and felt a void which nothing could fill. I continued in this state before and after I rose: but it hindered not that I should seek Him in secret. In the family I had some freedom, and desired to wait upon Him for His favour during the day. The sun shone out in great splendour—the air was clear and balmy—and all around seemed to enjoy a Sabbath—the sea, and the dry land. I was very feeble in body, and was obliged to lie down on the sofa, and keep from close thinking. The tent had been erected in a hollow near the sea, and at half past eleven I went out to begin the service. We had about two thousand people, and from first to last hardly a creature left the ground. I was upheld, and enlarged beyond my expectations. I had thought of merely preaching a sermon, but at breakfast the conversation led me to see the importance of placing much of His truth before men. I at once resolved to expound, and was quickly fixed to the first Psalm. In the first prayer I thought we had His presence, and throughout the exposition I was in a quiet, but blessed frame of mind. We again sang, and prayed, and I was still more elevated in this last exercise. I then preached my sermon, but the truth increased on my hand, so that I did not get through the tenth part of the first head. We had worship afer dinner—a meeting in the village at seven, and worship again between ten and eleven at night.

Monday, 11th September, 1854.

Castletown: A friend informed me that persons from

almost every parish in Caithness had been at the sermon yesterday, and four individuals even from Reay. A number of the workmen here gathered round me as I walked out, and listened eagerly to what was said to them.

Tuesday, 12th September, 1854.

Castletown: I slept well, and awoke early. I had a good time, especially in family worship, and soon after breakfast prepared to set out to Scarmplate. I had been sorely tried and tossed about my text, but was fixed to Galations II, 20, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live," etc., and had sensible nearness in committing myself and my work to the Lord. I was astonished at the change in our favour on the weather, the rain having gone off, and the day as clear and fine nearly as Sabbath. We had a great deal of conversation going and returning: yet I sought to keep near to the spring-head of truth and life. We began the services, which were in the open air, at twelve o'clock. I felt a savour of His presence throughout—especially in the last prayer. The truth opened with extraordinary fulness, and again I did not get through the first head, though I preached an hour and a half. We had about three hundred people, notwithstanding the throng of the harvest. I am asked to give another Sabbath in these parts, but I fear I must return to the South, and get rest before the winter. The Lord guide me to His holy will. I rested after dinner, and was too lively at tea, and talked too much, and too strongly. Oh, for the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit in His sight of great price. I was glad to retreat to my room and be alone.

Wednesday, 13th September, 1854.

Castletown: We had rain last night, but I hoped it would go off, and accordingly we had another clear and beautiful day. I had a pleasant night though I awoke more than once, and rose pretty fresh in body, and lively in mind. I had a letter, from a friend, which filled my heart with emotion: and I wondered at the goodness which He makes to pass before me. I had got my text, and an opening into the truth, and after breakfast, and worship, and committing myself and my work to His care, I drove off to Newlands of Tain. I felt fagged

and weary as I went, but preaching drove away my ailments, and I felt vigorous and elastic. We had upwards of six hundred people, and I preached with ease, and freedom—the truth welling up like a spring, and in forms that astonished me. I had a good old Cameronian in the tent beside me, A.O., 87 years of age, but as clear and lively in mind as if he were in mid-time of his days. I went into his cottage, and partook of the simple fare offered to me. He returned thanks in a way that I rarely hear, and I was encouraged by the testimony he bore to my ministry. We got home about four o'clock, and after giving thanks I went down-stairs to dinner, and was very happy. I saw that if my preaching is to do good, I must keep near to the strength of Israel: but how soon do I wander from him.

Thursday, 14th September, 1854.

Castletown: I awoke very early this morning, and in reference to the account of my labours, which I send to my wife and others, a fear came over me that I might be sacrificing to my own net, and burning incense to my own drag. We dined early, and at three o'clock I set off to Halkirk, where we arrived at a quarter past four. I had a cup of tea, and seeking His presence, and the unction that abideth, I went out to the tent. We had about four hundred people, and I preached with some simplicity, and tenderness. The truth I felt to be very precious, and most abundant. We got home safely after a pleasant drive in a calm though rather dark night, about nine o'clock, and I felt very happy. I sought to commit the truth to Himself. We had worship, and supper, and I prepared for my bed, rather tired in body, and fagged in mind, but content, and in the enjoyment of peace.

Friday, 15th September, 1854.

Wick: I had a pleasant morning—my soul lively and careful to wait upon the Lord, and cleave to Him. I found it good to draw near again and again in secret: and also in the family. I endeavoured to commit myself, and all my concerns into His hand, having a special eye to my family, my people, and the work I have gone through in these parts. I left Castlehill at eleven o'clock, and after a delightful drive arrived at

Wick at two o'clock. I went to a bedroom in the Hotel, and returned thanks. I was burdened about the meeting. We began at six o'clock. I had freedom, and savour, but the enemy laboured hard to disturb us, yet we tided over the opposition. The place was quite full, and not fewer than two hundred were in it. I preached with a vigour and order that surprised me, considering where I was.

Saturday, 16th September, 1854.

Dunbeath: I had a pretty comfortable night, but awoke early. I rose before eight o'clock, and had worship alone in my bedroom, and found it refreshing. I thought it were well if I could wrestle all the day, and enquired what sort of plans I might employ to move Him to bear testimony to the word of His grace. I left Wick shortly after ten o'clock, and tried to keep my thoughts right as I drove along, but they were ever flying off to vanity, and sin, and so I was wounded, and had to cry for healing. I have many things to teach me that unless an Omniscient eye watch me, and an Omnipotent arm guard me, I am sure to stumble. The cause of my Lord is now to me what it never has been, and I fear lest it suffer in my hands. "I am oppressed, undertake for me." We have opposition here, but friends started up in other quarters. We had to pitch our tent in new ground. In the prospect of the Sabbath I was like a bruised reed—frail in body, and poor in mind, and hardly able to think, I am so nervous. I would commit my way to the Lord: trust also in Him, that He will fulfil His counsel, and do all His pleasure.

Sabbath, 17th September, 1854.

Dunbeath: I was disturbed by dreams, and when I awoke did not feel at all well. I was made to pass as through the valley of the shadow of death—trembling seized upon me, and I almost despaired of life. I continued in this state till twelve o'clock—the hour fixed for public worship. In the midst of all my troubles, I felt the Holy One very near, and was afraid of His majesty. The people had assembled in great numbers, and were quietly seated around the humble tent that had been erected. I suppose there were considerably above two thousand, and certainly many

more than when I was last here. I felt a sensible savour in giving out the first Psalm—in the first prayer—and yet more in reading a chapter, and commenting upon it in brief. I had great freedom, and much tenderness in the first part of my sermon, but after preaching more than an hour, several showers fell. I thought of stopping, but was reluctant to leave the subject: till at last the rain was so heavy I was compelled to give out a Psalm, and sit down. The rain providentially went off, the sun shone out in great heat and brilliancy—the people remained like a rock, and I went on till half past two—the subject growing as I advanced. I came home, and was surprised to find in my room a nice clear fire. I committed the truth to His hand—ate a nice dinner, and rested, and read till after tea, when a few friends came to worship. I expounded, and had an opening of the truth that surpassed all I have yet got. He filleth the hungry with good things. My soul should make its boast in the Lord.

Monday, 18th September, 1854.

Dunbeath: I slept well, and awoke refreshed. I was plunged into the mire, and had to cry for cleansing. I saw that I may not reprove another for a deed, unless the principle of it in me be mortified: and I may not find fault for the want of a grace, unless its fruit appear in my life. I was burdened with a sense of my sinfulness, and saw some striking applications of my text—"When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." I had no letters from home, but was set to pray for my dear wife and children. I wrote two letters, and in that to my daughter, said that my preaching specially bound me to be wise, and humble, and upright, and their relation to me bound them to the same. A few friends called, and one of them cheered me by informing me of the satisfaction felt in the testimony borne to the truth.

I went to see B.G., an old woman, bed-ridden for twenty years. She had said five years ago that Mr. Anderson would yet be in Caithness. I sat a long time beside her, but would not touch nor taste what she offered: only I asked a blessing, and felt a savour remain, and was anxious to bring it with me. I came

home to dinner: rested a while, and then went out to walk. I had tea at seven, and prayed, and read, and wrote, with considerable solemnity, and at times deep concern at the state of things in our day, and poignant distress at my own sinfulness. I saw that if my ministry is to be blessed, the Lord will break the back of every sorrow. For He has given the promise to those that are nothing before Him. Oh, to be humble!

Tuesday, 19th September, 1854.

Wick: I had a good night—awoke early, and had thoughts of various kinds running through my mind. I had worship quietly before breakfast, and was somewhat stayed. The day was beautiful: the sun shining in his strength, and the reapers had resumed their labours. I left Dunbeath soon after ten o'clock, and got to S. soon after eleven. The people had begun even then to assemble, but the services did not begin till after twelve. We had then a congregation of about five hundred. I was burdened before I went to the tent, but had a steady light on the truth, and some strength and freedom in proclaiming it. The people were very attentive, and apparently impressed. I came away quiet and solemn, and afraid of losing what He had wrought. We had a plain substantial dinner in a cottage near to where the tent had been pitched, and about four o'clock we started for this place. I enjoyed the drive, and sought to be quiet and thoughtful. I kneeled down when I got to the Hotel, and gave thanks for His mercy.

Wednesday, 20th September, 1854.

Wick: I awoke very early this morning, and did not sleep much afterwards. I read and prayed in my room before I came downstairs, and felt that His name was near. After breakfast I read part of the CII Psalm in Hebrew, but did not get much. We had a good congregation at the Cameronian Chapel. The solemnity of the truth was quite awful. I had a deeply interesting meeting with friends afterwards, who seem wishful to organise a body to circulate the tracts, and to get preaching when they can. What can He not do! A little one will become a strong nation. I the Lord will hasten it in its time.

Thursday, 21st September, 1854.

Castletown: I had a long and refreshing sleep, and rose this morning a little after eight o'clock, lively and vigorous. I had an abiding though not oppressive sense of Him who liveth, and seeth me, and watched not to offend, even in thought—knowing the thought of foolishness is sin. I prayed, and afterwards had worship. I left Wick at twelve o'clock, and after a cold drive in the gig, got here between two and three o'clock. I sought to be alone, but was interrupted, and had, therefore, recourse to ejaculatory giving of thanks for the mercy shown in leading me about so safely. The wind was very high, and the air cold and piercing, so that Mr. McB. talked of meeting in the School house. But it was resolved to try the open air, and it was well, for upwards of four hundred people were assembled. I wondered at the truth that was laid to my hand. I also had a greater nearness to the Fountain than I have had at all, and was amazingly elevated and refreshed. But though the utmost attention was given, I came away pitying the poor people if they are shut out from His salvation. I saw, however, that the world is condemened only when *His* light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.

Friday, 22nd September, 1854.

Castletown: I awoke early—my sleep had refreshed me, and my mind was calm and peaceful. I had a good time at family worship. The light on the last chapter of Zechariah was clear and striking, and awakened feelings of wonder in me. I set out about twelve o'clock in the gig to see A.O. I found the dear old man in bed, and greatly delighted to see me. I remained at least an hour: and such an hour I have not had with a fellow creature since I came to Caithness. He was at first rather dull, but soon he became lively, and before we parted he was all life and affection. I felt it good to be there, and breathed the atmosphere of heaven. In the evening I had a remarkable exercise on glorifying His name, and had feeble desire that all eyes should be to Him, and all hearts should be upon Him. I saw at a later hour that I should plead the righteousness of Christ for this end.

Saturday, 23rd September, 1854.

Castletown: I awoke out of a sound and refreshing sleep, and was peaceful and happy. I kept a watch over my thoughts, and sought that they might flow in a pure and holy channel. I had freedom of access in secret, and in the worship in the family got light upon the scripture read—the first chapter of Malachi. I went upstairs, and sought the Lord, and read the word, and wrote all the forenoon with comfort. I carried on my mind the work of tomorrow, and wonder what He will do. I was shut up to this to seek what will please Him —"glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify Thee." The heavy fall of rain has put me to the test. I have endeavoured to commit the matter to Him who does all things well—desiring that my will should as to the weather, be subject to His. The Parish minister sent to say the church was at my service. I returned for answer with my compliments, "That I hoped the good Providence which had hitherto favoured us, would do so still, and allow me to preach in the open air." I am at a stand as to what He will do tomorrow, whether allow me to preach, or cause me to be silent. I tried to plead His love to His dear Son, and His delight in honouring Him, but whether it is by one kind of dispensation or another is known to Himself, and there I leave it. Oh, that I, and the people, may be prepared, and that He may appear in His glory.

Sabbath, 24th September, 1854.

Castletown: I awoke very early, but fell asleep again as I felt tired and stiff. The rain had gone off, but it looked dark and threatening, and I was afraid we should not be able to meet at all. In the family worship I was bowed down, and broken, and had some things that were as much as I could well bear. I tried to plead that He would favour us in the weather, and yet to submit to His will—saying I might do more good by my praying than by my preaching. I went to the tent before twelve o'clock, and was surprised ere long to see an immense multitude of people, at least fifteen hundred. I was told that had the day been good—for it was very wet early in the morning—there had been a thousand more. I was helped in giving out the Psalm, and still

more in the sermon, and some impressive appeals were made, which the people appeared to feel. I sang and prayed with liberty, and then began my sermon, but though I preached two hours I got through only the first head of my discourse. I came home very empty, and sorely humbled, and was like to be crushed by reason of my unprofitableness. We had worship after dinner, and I got some freedom. We went up to the village to a prayer meeting after six o'clock. The place was crowded and I was very warm. But I tried to get near to my refuge, and had a precious night. The most furious hail storm came on three hours after the sermon. I wondered at the favour shown to us. What shall we render to the Lord for all His benefits. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.

Monday, 25th September, 1854.

Castletown: I had a little of the spirit of prayer drawing me to plead for the blessing on the word spoken in this part of the country. I was rather stiff and feeble from the labours of yesterday, and felt that my soul was like a machine, the wheels of which needed oil. I read my Hebrew Bible, and prayed, and wrote several letters. I left for Thurso at five o'clock, and after tea, and committing myself to the Chief Shepherd, I went to the meeting. The schoolroom was filled to excess, and many outside, who took out part of the windows that they might hear. I was told that there could not be less than two hundred and sixty inside. The exercises were awfully solemn, and I do trust arrows entered the hearts of some.

Tuesday, 26th September, 1854.

Wick: We had two Cameronians this morning at breakfast. The conversation turned upon several points of great importance, and was kept up with lively interest for a long time. I felt the worship appropriate to the occasion—my departure from Castlehill, where I had experienced so much kindness, and where I had spent so many happy moments with the Portion of the soul. I left between ten and eleven, and had a good man with me to bring back the gig. I had a great deal of pleasant conversation with

him in the course of the journey, and had further proof of the wide-spread interest awakened throughout Caithness by the preaching of the word. I had sensible liberty when I came back to the Hotel, and had tea. My spirits were low under a sense of my sinfulness, and the fear that some secret lust might be allowed to have the mastery, while I should not know it till the last. I sought repeatedly to get access, and had seasons of the most remarkable pleading I almost ever remember to have had. Oh, that He would fulfil all my desires!

(Two year afterwards Rev. J. R. Anderson heard of the case of a young woman who said, she would have cause through eternity to bless God for his visit to that County).

CONCLUSION OF SECOND VISIT TO CAITHNESS.

In the year 1846 Mr. Anderson buried a choice friend, Rev. Peter McBride, at Rothesay. For two-and-a-half hours he preached to an immense multitude from Matt. xxiii, 38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." The writer has it in recollection, being in Rothesay churchyard, when a friend pointed to a tombstone, remarking, "There lies one to whom the truth came with power that day, and who continued faithful unto death." A few particulars of Peter McBride follow which have been extracted from an old Magazine:—

"His labours were much blessed at Rothesay; also at Knapdale in a valley among the mountains, that skirt Loch Fyne on the west. Before his first visit the inhabitants were wild and godless, living in a state of ignorance and depravity; a place where Sabbath revelry alone marked that day from other week-days. An extraordinary awakening took place, the whole district was changed; drunkards became sober, the profane became reverent, Sabbath breakers thronged to the place of worship; from families that lately called not upon the name of God, prayer was heard ascending morning and evening. Peter McBride had severe tests of Christianity, was not easily persuaded of a person's conversion; but there were three hundred he said of whom he felt assured that they had truly passed from

darkness to light. The labour of attending to his congregation at Rothesay, and of visiting his Highland and Island charge, was too much even for his iron frame; but he laboured on. A friend spent a night with him, and from the tone and savour of his conversation, formed a half suspicion that his time on earth would be short. The atmosphere of heaven seemed around him. But he was quite well, and about to set out for Knapdale, to visit some of the islands studding the western sea. He was in a boat with two men, when a mist came over the sea, and they lost their way, beating about all night. Mr. McBride assisted in rowing, and then lay down exhausted, and they covered him with a wet sail. In the morning they found themselves on the shore of an island where stood the house of a friend. He was weary and very ill. Gladly his friends received him, and thankfully he retired to bed. When the islanders heard of his arrival they surrounded the house; and the large-hearted, unselfish man arose and preached to them. When the service was over he lay down to arise no more. Violent sufferings attacked him. Medical men were at hand, but they could not reach his case. Word was sent to his flock, and shocked and agonized, they sent a deputation of Elders to visit his dying bed. He could scarcely speak to them: but he could say, 'Tell them to cleave to Christ, and love one another.' And so he died."

Mr. Anderson was a great expositor of Scripture, having throughout his 25 years ministry expounded nearly all the New Testament.

A considerable number of these Expositions and also Sermons are ready for publication, when, in the providence of God, there is a call for them.

He had a warm appreciation of Joseph Hart's hymns, and commended them to others; also Cowper's hymns. He often spoke of the latter as "our own Cowper." In the public ministry he never quoted hymns. I can only trace one exception, and with this must close this sketch. "Joy is a fruit that will not grow, on nature's barren soil; All we can boast till Christ we know, Is vanity and toil." *(From Olney hymns).*

H. B. PITT.

"The Door of Salvation"

(Preached 27th November, 1836).

JOHN x. 9.—"*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*"

TO a man who is in any measure duly alive to the state of guilt and misery in which he comes into the world, and in which if he leaves it, he shall eternally wish that he had never been born, it must appear a question of the greatest magnitude, how he may be delivered from it, and brought into a state of peace and happiness. When this question is raised by an individual thus affected, it is not every answer that will meet and settle it. An enquiry into the matter, that is proposed merely to gain information, to avoid the reproach of being ignorant of that which everybody ought to know, or to serve some present or merely worldly purpose, is very easily put to rest. But when a man is under the pressure of conscious guilt, when he is grieved with the deprivation of fellowship with God, when he is bowed down and afflicted with the views that rise up before him, and the corruptions that rankle within him, and in these circumstances puts the question, how he may escape the wrath which is to come, it needs an Interpreter one of a thousand, to solve his enquiries, and to allay his fears. He feels it is with God he has to do, it is against Him he has sinned, from Him he is banished, and by Him he is condemned. And, therefore, does he judge, that no plan of escape can be trusted to, which does not bear upon it the seal of His approbation, and that no way of safety ought to be entered upon, which has not been opened by the power of His grace. To such a man, the words of the text are fraught

with the most welcome intelligence, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

In the text, there are some things evidently presupposed, to which, in the first place, it is needful that we turn our attention.

And first, it is presupposed, that men are in a state of danger. Were you to pass the Asylum for the Blind, and read on the gate-way the inscription which bears the name of that Institution, you would at once conclude that in our city there were individuals destitute of the sense of sight. In like manner, when we read, as in the text, of a door of salvation, what can be plainer than that there must be some who are in danger? And, brethren, is not this fact recorded and illustrated on every page of the Word of God? In our world there are men in danger, and most imminent danger, not only of temporal calamities, and bodily sufferings, but of eternal destruction, and spiritual plagues. But where are they? They are here, in our city, in our assembly, we, we are the men: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."

But, secondly, it is presupposed in the text that an asylum has been provided for those who are in danger. A door is the entrance to some enclosure, be it a temple, a house, or a sheep-fold; and this is fully taught in the Holy Scriptures: indeed, this is the burden of these invaluable writings, and from Genesis to Revelation the theme for substance is, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill to men." The law indeed is there promulgated in its holy requirements, and its fiery sanctions. The regions of woe are described in their eternal darkness, their undying worm, and their unquenchable flame; the corruptions of men are depicted in their native malignity, and their restless activity—the glory of the Highest is unfolded in its peerless majesty, in its awful purity, in its winning grace: but all, brethren, is designed to illustrate and commend the salvation of God, or to leave men inexcusable if they neglect it. The message of Moses, of the prophets, of

Christ and His apostles, is, "We bring you glad tidings of great joy. Unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

But, thirdly, it is presupposed that the Asylum is the peculiar property of God. A door is uniformly an appendage of houses or lands that are appropriated, and not left open and free to all. And is not a state of salvation, in the strictest sense of the word, private property? What are the images under which it is set forth in the Scriptures? It is in one place called a kingdom, in another a city, in a third a temple, in a fourth a house, in a fifth a vineyard, in a sixth a sheepfold, every one of which involves the idea of private property. But how can it be otherwise? Who but God could contrive an asylum for sinners? Man has found out many inventions, but never could he have hit upon the invention of a secure refuge for a guilty soul. Who but God could have constructed this Asylum? The power of man is great: he can raise Babels, build cities, erect palaces, but a city of salvation lies beyond his strength: "none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Who but God can bring men into this asylum? The children of men will go anywhere, at the impulse of their own ambition, or at the nod of the god of the world, but unto the city of God's salvation, if left to their own wills, they never will go. The Bible says of Israel what it says of all; "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," but neither of Israel nor of any other does it say, "Thou hast saved thyself." Who but God can keep men in this asylum? When men are once settled in a comfortable dwelling, they are loth to leave it, but strange to say, no sooner do men enter the city of God, and taste of its joys, than their old man begins to hanker after the world, and infallibly would they turn back, if the Lord did not keep them. Hence we read, "who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." In every view you can take of it, the state of salvation is God's peculiar property: "The Lord hath chosen Zion: He hath desired it for His habitation."

We are thus brought to consider in the second place, the entrance to this asylum, "I am the door." The

speaker here is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Blessed, who is of one essence with Him, and equal to Him in the glory and majesty of the Divine nature. He did, however, in amazing condescension, become incarnate, and by a mystery of wisdom, and power, and love, which we cannot fathom, did assume the nature of man into personal union with Himself. In this wondrous constitution of Person, did He stand, and with a majesty and grace peculiar to Himself, declare, "I am the door." The honour He thus wears is very high, the office He fills is arduous; but when we reflect on the dignity of His person and the variety of His endowments, we cannot doubt that He is perfectly equal to the work assigned to Him: He is the "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." But why is this glorious One called the door?

In seeking the answer to this question, let it be observed, that the state of salvation into which sinners are to be brought is a state of covenant love with God, of federal union to the Lord Christ, of fellowship with the Holy Ghost, of communion with all saints, and of true and eternal purity and blessedness. Now, Christ is called the door, because it is through Him, and for His sake, that any of the children of men are introduced to this privileged condition. Why was it, brethren, that Adam, and in him the whole of his seed was shut out from God, from holiness, and bliss? Why, but for their sin. And if sin required that they should be once shut out, it required that they should always be shut out, till it was removed. For, do you look at the guilt of sin? It, in its own nature, and by the just sentence of God, deserved eternal damnation. And so long as guilt lies upon a creature, so long is it impossible in the nature of things, that he can deserve admission to the favour of God, and all its attendant blessings: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But look again at the influence of sin, and you see that it renders men incapable of the enjoyment of God. Now, were we to yield to the pride of men, what they presumptuously claim, that they are entitled to the friendship of God, what would they be the better of it? No more than a blind man, were you to set him down in a beautiful palace, or a deaf man,

were you to admit him to the sweetest music, or a dead man, were you to place him at a royal banquet. Nay, he would be worse. Were the depraved sinner taken to the palace of the Great King, with its nameless beauties and delights, he would be intolerably miserable, and would long to make his escape, though it were to descend to the sides of the bottomless pit. Why, there are men on whom you could not inflict a severer penance than to compel them to mingle with the saints here for a whole day. Oh, how dismal to them must be the prospect of an eternity of such scenes, immeasurably heightened and magnified! The wicked say unto God, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

Now, Christ is the door, because by His Surety work He hath taken away sin, and thus obtained a good and valid title to eternal life. He did come under the law, in its precept, and never was He discouraged, deep as was the conflict, and severe as were the labours, till He said, "It is finished." In consequence of this glorious work, which will be the wonder and study of saints and angels through eternal ages, He was Himself exalted into ineffable glory: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." The everlasting doors of the heavenly glory were opened to Him, because He appeared with His own blood, the shedding of which was the consummation of His work; just as the High Priest passed through the veil of the temple, once a year, with the blood of sacrifices, so is Christ's blood and the righteousness which it completed, made that on the ground of which sinful men are admitted to a state of grace here and of glory hereafter: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities."

We have said, however, that another effectual barrier to the admission of sinners to a state of favour with God, is the corruption which has been wrought in their

nature, utterly incapacitating them from the enjoyment of this privilege. To meet this feature of their case, the Lord Christ is made their sanctification, as well as their righteousness. In Him, there is a fulness of life, of power, and every grace. He hath, in virtue of His meritorious obedience unto death, received the glorious dispensation of the Spirit: "for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." And just as in His blood and righteousness there is merit enough for the justification of sinners, so in the fulness of grace there is efficacy enough for their sanctification. He "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

We are thus brought to consider thirdly, what it is to enter by this door. We must remind you that the door which under the former head has been very briefly described is presented in the preaching of the Gospel. For the grand design of that ordinance is to exhibit the Lord Christ, His ineffable glory and abundant grace, as the way, and the only way, of salvation to a lost world. Now, it is by the faith of Christ as thus held forth to men that they are to enter into the sheep-fold, the city of God, the kingdom of heaven, or by whatever emblem the dispensation of grace may be represented. Do not picture to yourselves a something which is altogether beyond your reach, a door which is totally inaccessible except to angels and departed spirits. The door is in the holy Word—it is presented in the preaching of every faithful minister, "Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above:) or who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved."

To prevent mistakes, however, in this vital point, let it be observed, that it is only faith produced in the heart by the regenerating Spirit of Christ, by which a man enters the door: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The necessity of this arises

from the imbecility, and depravity, which sin hath wrought in the whole nature of man, body and soul, in all their powers, and principles, and affections. By many, it is deemed a sufficient reason why they should dismiss from their minds all concern on the subject, and resign themselves to the most perfect indulgence and ease, that it is not in them to enter the door. But is it not an awful perversion of truth and decency, to make your very sin a reason, why you should be regardless of that which alone can deliver from it? Why, it is because you are so blind, that like the men of Sodom, though you grope ever so long, you cannot find the door: it is because you are so corrupt, that like idolatrous Israel, though you be entreated ever so earnestly, you say "No: we have loved idols, and after them will we go:" it is because you are so rebellious, that like the same people, you have made your neck stiff as iron, your brow bold as brass: it is because of all this, that the illuminating and life giving Spirit of Christ, must take of that which is His, and shew it unto you, before you will understand, or receive, or submit to Him. The Lord Christ is here exhibited to you in a glory, and beauty, and sufficiency that eclipse the brightness of meridian sun. His great work of mediation is unfolded in type and ceremony, in promise and prophecy, in narrative and doctrine, and that too, with a minuteness and richness, which leave nothing to be supplied. And to crown the whole, the God of love, of holiness, of truth, condescends to address you, and says, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" "Behold, I have set before you an open door." It is wide enough to admit you: it is sure enough to sustain you. Why then, oh why, will you die? My brethren, there is not a reason which consistently with truth you can give for not responding to this appeal, which will not prove the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Ghost. And oh, how gracious is it to provide not only a door of hope and a way of salvation, but a Spirit to guide to it, a Spirit to dispose for it, a Spirit to strengthen to enter it! "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit unto them that ask Him!"

But who, it may be asked, are invited to enter? Let the text answer the question. "If *any man* enter in." To look at the glory that beams from the door, the perfection of Godhead, and the lovely graces of sinless humanity, with a surety righteousness, atoning blood, all prevailing intercession, and a free Spirit; to reflect on the glory of the place that lies beyond it, and to which it is the entrance, we should think that every one would cast a wistful eye towards it, and say, "Ah, who are the favoured, the happy people, for whom all this is prepared, who are they that may venture to go up to this door, yea to enter by it into the peace, and purity, and joy that reign within? What would the feelings of men in these circumstances be, if the simple announcement were made, "If *any* man enter in?" What could these feelings be, but, "Oh the height, and the depth, the breadth, and the length of the love of God in Christ: it passeth knowledge!" The grace, brethren, is made the richer, that instead of this, scarcely an eye is lifted off from the vanities of the world, and turned to the glorious object: few, few will deign to bestow a serious thought on the wonderful door, and the glory to which it opens. If there be a door to sure business, to a little more wealth, to a little more pleasure, a little more honour, you will see it besieged by crowds: but the door of the sheep-fold—the door of grace here and glory hereafter—is almost entirely deserted. Now and then, a straggling pilgrim finds his way to it, with a heavy load of sin on his conscience, and a grievous burden of sorrow in his heart. And, for the benefit of such, we again repeat the gracious words, "If any man enter." And to shew that there is no mistake, take other words of similar import, and fragrant with the same grace; "He that believeth shall be saved." "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely": "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

We must now, in the fourth place, advert to the benefits which are enjoyed by him who enters at the door: "he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." By some such invitations as those with which we closed the illustration of the former head, applied to the heart by the Holy Ghost, is the individual vitally

united to the Lord Christ, accepted as righteous in the sight of God, and constituted an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ Jesus. But we must look a little more closely into the benefits to which he is introduced. And first, says our Lord, "he shall be saved." The moment he enters by the door in plain terms, that moment he believes in Christ, he is saved from the wrath of God. The Lord's words to him are, "I was angry with thee, but now mine anger is turned away." He is saved from the condemnation of the law: "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He is safe from the dominion of sin: "Ye are now made free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness." He is safe from the servitude of the world: "I," says Christ, "have chosen you out of the world." He is safe from the tyranny of the devil: "The prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered." He is safe from the fear of death; "He hath destroyed death, and him that hath the power of it, and delivered them who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage." In a word, he is safe from all the evils which sin has brought upon our race in time and throughout eternity: "He is saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation."

By the faith of Christ, he enters a city of refuge, whither the avenger of blood may not pursue him, and where he cannot lay hands upon him. It is true that through presumption, or carelessness, or the allurements of the world, he may sometimes be induced to venture forth from his sanctuary; and then does sin assail him, and the law harass him, and the fear of wrath surround him; and hard may be the struggle to get back by the renewed exercise of faith to his hiding-place; but no sooner has he crossed the threshold, than his enemies fall back, and leave him in the enjoyment of perfect peace. For the safety which he has through Christ is sure, it is all-sufficient, and it is abiding. The believer may question its stability, and question his interest in it, but this cannot shake it, far less move it from its firm foundation. The sanctuary in which it is enjoyed is too high to be scaled by any foe: it is too strong to be carried by any assault: it is too stable to be overturned

by any revolution: "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And as to the believer's interest in it; "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

The second benefit he enjoys is thus expressed, "He shall go in and out." By this is meant in general a state of great freedom and tranquility, as opposed to one of restraint and peril. When men are cooped up in a city by a hostile army, or bound with chains in a prison, they cannot go in and out. Yea, this is the case too, when they are under the influence of very lively apprehensions, though no actual restraint be imposed on them. But there is evident allusion in the language here employed to the state of a flock that are in a place of perfect security, where they may go in to the fold, and go out to pasture, at the pleasure of the Shepherd. Now, just so is it with the true believer in Christ; he feels like a man liberated from confinement, and freed from an oppressive yoke, and his soul is lightened and enlarged to delight himself in the ways of the Lord: "And I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in His name, saith the Lord. Zec. x. 12. The state of guilt and sin in which he before lay, however lightly it may sit upon those whose consciences are seared, and whose hearts are blinded, was to him the most galling bondage. He was haunted with fears by day, and terrors by night: he was afraid to lie down, lest he should never arise: he trembled to appear before God, and he dared not remain at a distance from Him: his mind was thus enslaved, his affections were bound up: his hands were paralysed: "I am shut up," says the Psalmist, in a state of deep distress, "and I cannot come forth. Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction."

But, oh brethren, how happy the change that is wrought upon him, when he enters the door, and finds himself safe! He sees that he is in a large room, even the covenant of eternal love, its immeasurable compass, and its immense fulness. He discovers that by his reconciliation to God, he has obtained reconciliation

with every thing; that he has made a covenant, so to speak, with the very beasts of the field; yea, that his very enemies are at peace with him. He learns that all danger is passed away: the heavens that thundered with Jehovah's wrath now drop down salvation: the earth that brought forth only thorns and briers, now yields the lovely fruits of righteousness: the pit that yawned to devour him is now closed: the law which threatened him with vengeance is now completely satisfied, and conscience, which vexed him, is now pacified; his sins are mortified, the world subdued, the devil chained up, and all things are under the control of the wisdom and power of his covenant God, and made to work together for his good. And, therefore, he feels that he may go in and out, with safety and with comfort. He lives, it is true, in an enemy's country, and in a sinful world, but it is a city, the walls of which are salvation, and the gates praise. He walks forth amidst foes, visible and invisible, but it is attended by a host of angels, yea, surrounded by the Lord of angels: For "as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever." He sings therefore with the Psalmist, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help, my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth."

The last benefit here mentioned is "he shall find pasture." To this, brethren, the previous privileges are only preparatory: for the Lord sets him free from the miseries of his fallen estate, and brings him to the possession of spiritual peace, and liberty, that he may enjoy the abundance of good which he hath provided for him. The pasture of the flock of Christ is very rich, exceedingly nourishing, and deeply satisfying. The most lovely and beautiful similitudes are employed in Scripture to set it forth, but after all we are given to understand its excellency cannot be expressed. We read of green pastures, and still waters, of the beauty of Sharon, and the glory of Carmel, of the finest of the wheat, and honey out of the rock—of blessings, yea showers of blessings, descending on the hill of Zion. But leaving these appropriate and interesting figures, let us glance at the glorious reality. The pasture then is essentially

the Blessed God Himself, in the beauty of His majesty, the splendour of His glory, and the fulness of His grace. The soul of a believer cannot rest in any object short of this, as the source of his truest delight and highest satisfaction. And whatever view we take of the pasture in which he feeds, will derive its chief value from its relation to Him, and its fitness to manifest His glory: "Delight thyself in God, and He will give thee the desires of thine heart." In accordance with this injunction the Psalmist exclaims, "O Lord, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."

The pasture is mediatorially the Lord Christ, in His glorious person, and finished work. To us, brethren, there is no saving nor soul satisfying discovery of God, but in Christ Jesus. And as He has been pleased to communicate Himself through Christ, we must seek the enjoyment of Him through the same channel. Now, the Scripture is full of Christ, and in everything that is said of Him, may the believer see that of the blessed God which is fitted to nourish and refresh his soul: "I have manifested thy Name, unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world": And what He thus manifested to them, the apostle John wrote he declared to their converts, "that ye also might have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." "And these things," he adds, "write we unto you, that your joy may be full."

The pasture is *efficiently,* the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. We have said there is no discovery of God to us but in Christ; and we now remark, that there is no application of Christ for the support and comfort of the soul, but by the Spirit. The treasures of Christ are indeed immense, and rich, and suitable, and the soul of a believer is poor, and needy, and desolate: but, brethren, it needeth the Spirit to take of these treasures, and shew them to the soul, and to bring the soul up to a participation and enjoyment of them. The apostle, accordingly, who implored for those to whom he wrote, "the love of the Father, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," implored also, as essential to the possession of the other two, "the communion of the Holy Ghost."

The pasture is *formally*, the exceeding great and precious promises of the New Covenant. We find in this matter everything arranged with a beautiful and nice adaptation to the wants and condition of believers; and, therefore, that they might know what is the provision made for their souls, and might be assured of its permanency and sufficiency, the Lord has been pleased to set it before them in a system of the richest promises. And hence it is that you will often hear them say, they fed upon the promises: they were nourished by the words of His mouth; "whereby," says the Apostle, "are given unto us exceedingly great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature."

The pasture is *instrumentally* the ordinances of God's grace. In this we see a farther condescension to the state and capacity of His people, and a bringing the spiritual nourishment still nearer to them. But let it be carefully observed, that ordinances, however lovely, and however useful, are but the instruments which God employs to communicate good to the soul: they are like fields in which the pasture grows, not the pasture itself: they are like the well that contains the water of life, not the water itself. In these, hence, we may say with the prophet; "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Of these ordinances, there are the services of the Sanctuary, all of which, and especially the preaching of the word, are made instrumental in pasturing the flock. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." And in another Psalm, after pouring forth his ardent desires after God, he adds, "To see thy power, and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." There are also the exercises of the family and of the closet. To advert to the latter only, there is the reading of the word. Oh, how often does a believer feed upon the sweetest pasture, as he reads of the glory of the Lord in Christ Jesus, of His covenant faithfulness and love, of the riches of His inheritance in the saints, of the fulness of grace, and the immensity of glory! "Thy words were found," says

Jeremiah, "and I did eat them, and they were the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." There is farther, the exercise of meditation. What a believer does not find in simply reading the word, he finds from settling down upon it in holy meditation. When the thoughts are fixed upon some particular passage, or employed in tracing out some delightful view, then one ray of light follows upon another, till the whole soul is lighted up, and the heart filled with ecstacy: "Oh, how love I thy law: it is my meditation all the day." The godly man's "delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night, and what is the effect? "He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." There is secret prayer. This, brethren, is the most effectual means of pasturing the soul: because in it the soul obtains the nearest access to the blessed God: and, as we have already remarked, it is in communion with Him that spiritual nourishment doth essentially consist. Oh, what glorious views has a believer obtained of the Divine character, of the fulness of covenant blessings, of the grandeur of eternal glory, while bending before the throne of mercy! And what delight and strength have thereby been imparted to his soul! "It is good for me that I draw near to God."

The last ordinance that we mention is the communion of saints—godly conversation—social prayer, with union in works of faith and labours of love. As "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "I long," say the Apostle, to the Romans, "to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established." And in another part of the same Epistle he says, "I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company."

We might dilate on the rich, the abundant, the suitable, and the satisfying nature of the pasture, but time forbids. The text says, he who entereth "shall find pasture." Let it be remarked, that this is the word of Him who hath all power in heaven and on earth committed to Him, and therefore no fear needs to be

entertained that the word shall fail or be frustrated. In the language made use of, however, it is clearly implied that a believer must seek pasture; and this he cannot but do in virtue of the new nature that is given him: for just as a new-born babe seeks its mother's milk, so does a child of God desire the unadulterated milk of the word, that he may grow thereby. And as he seeks it, so he has the word of Christ that he shall find it. He may sometimes be brought to great straits: he may have to undergo much toil: he may, like our forefathers, have to seek pasture in glens and caves, and at the peril of his life, but he shall assuredly find it, and that too in the manner and measure which Divine wisdom judges most suitable. The Lord may give him a faithful and devoted ministry, that will feed him with knowledge and understanding: or He may send him a ministry that is like wells without water, and clouds without rain; or He may take from him altogether these public ordinances, and cause the ways of Zion to mourn, because none go to the solemn feast; but in this case, He "will open up springs in the desert, and pools in the wilderness;" He will feed them by His own word, and the throne of His grace, or the fellowship of His saints. But even though the word should be taken away, and the enemy should prevail, so far as not only to burn up all the synagogues in the land, but to destroy all the bibles, still the Lord will supply the flock with pasture. He that fed Elijah by ravens, and Samson from the carcase of a lion, with the meat that perisheth, will not suffer His poor people to want for the bread that endureth to everlasting life: "The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall not want:" "The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

APPLICATION.

1. What cause, believing brethren, have you this day to magnify the Lord, and extol His name! He that is mighty hath indeed done for you great things, whereof your hearts may well be glad. Oh, look at the door that has been opened in His incarnate Son, that you houseless wanderers might enter into secure abode; that you, pursued by the avenger of blood, might have a city of refuge; that you who were as sheep going astray

might return to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls; and not only so, but that you who are by nature shut up in corruption and servitude, might go in and out in holy liberty and spiritual peace. And not this only, but that you who are ready to perish, no man caring for your souls, might enter into a land flowing with milk and honey, and be filled even as with marrow and fatness. We entreat you brethren, to walk as becometh a people so highly favoured of the Lord. O, keep close to Christ. Live by the faith of Him as the door to Divine favour and fellowship, to righteousness and strength, to peace and joy. And take His word, that entering by the door, ye shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

2. To burdened and distressed souls, the text speaks in accents of the richest grace, and tenderest love. We shall not dwell on the suitableness of these benefits to meet your case and to supply your souls. Of that you are perhaps in a measure already convinced. But what you have difficulty in believing is, that all this may be yours. Now, look at the words of the Faithful and True Witness: read and ponder them. And what is it they say? "If any man enter." He does not say, If a man be contrite and broken-hearted—if he be melted into humility and sorrow for sin—if he be full of spiritual desires and good resolutions—if he have not been guilty of flagrant sins or of abuse of privileges,—but if *any* man, be he what he may, of any character, in any condition,—if *any* man enter, he shall be saved. What more can you desire than this? O say, it is enough, "Behold we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God."

3. Let the self-righteous take warning from this subject. You know some little of your danger, and some little too of salvation. You feel that if something be not done, you must perish. But ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish your own righteousness, you do not submit to the righteousness of God. Not that you leave Christ out of your creed altogether: this were too gross an error to be committed by the professed members of the church. But then He is not the door, but your prayers, your church-goings,

and perhaps a few other things of the like kind. Now, we may let you heap these up as high as you please; the more you have of them, if you trust in them, the wider will be the gate through which you will have to pass to hell. No class of people are farther away from the door to grace and heaven than you: there is more hope of a fool, of an infidel, of a heathen, than of you. Oh, that you would ponder the words, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

4. We are once more, favoured to hear of glorious Christ, and in Him of eternal life. Ah, how blind must you be not to see Him; how stupid not to regard Him; how obstinate not to submit to Him; how infatuated not to receive Him! Christ the door formed by Divine wisdom, furnished by Divine grace, and opened by Divine love. And in this apostate world is the door opened? "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Oh, that the Lord may be pleased to say of you, and you, and you, "To-day, is salvation come to this house."

"One Sacrifice for Sins"

HEBREWS x. 12 and 13.—*"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God: From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."*

THE grand scope of this Epistle is to exalt the person of Christ; and this is done by showing that He is the Son of God, immeasurably superior to angels, and holding an office that distinguishes Him far above the ancient Levitical priests. The end proposed by thus exalting the person of Christ is, to establish the Hebrews in the faith of His name, and strengthen them in their attachment to His cause; and thus to induce them to hold fast the beginning of their confidence stedfast unto the end, and so not to be of those who draw back to perdition, but of such as believe to the saving of the soul. Now, if it was important to promote such an end as this in the days of the Apostles, it is hardly less so in the days in which we live, when so many influences set in upon those who profess the name of Christ, tending to move them away from this profession, and to make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. It is in the handling of this argument by the Apostle, with the design we have named, that he has occasion to say in the words of our text. "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God: From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." In order to take up in some small degree the import of these words, it will be necessary to enquire into the four following things:—

I. Who is this Man of whom the text speaks?
II. What has He done?
III. Where does He sit?
IV. What does He expect?

I. We have to enquire who this Man is of whom the text speaks. As may be gathered from the remarks already made of an introductory kind, He is the Son of God. That points to His true and proper nature: it is expressive of the original and essential dignity of His Person, and points to the ineffable relation which He holds to the Father. In this aspect, He is held forth in this very Epistle as the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His Person, in so much that He who sees the Son sees the Father also. But again, and taking up another line of illustration of this Man of whom the text speaks, let us look at the state in which He appears. He is in Himself in the form of God, and we can no more apprehend the state that pertains to Him, and becomes Him, than we can apprehend His infinite nature. He challenges the children of men to tell, if they can, where it becomes Him to dwell: "Where is the house that ye will build for Me, and where is the place of My rest?" It belongs to Him, equally with the Father and the Holy Ghost, to dwell in Himself. There is no temple costly enough from without the Godhead wherein He could dwell, and hence, in the highest discovery that is made of Him, there is seen no temple: "the Lord God is the temple." It is therefore very wonderful to find, that One so exalted should appear in the form of man, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for a season sojourn amongst men. This is the state in which we are called to look at Him, if we would apprehend who it is of whom the Apostle in the text now speaks. He who was in the beginning with God, and who was God, became flesh, and dwelt amongst men. He is therefore God-man. Still farther, and with the view of opening a little more of what is included in the expression "this man," we are called to look at the office He holds. It is wonderful, that an office should be created, such as it would become Him to take, and it is not less wonderful, that the office being created, He should humble Himself to take it. We see in the creation of the office of the priesthood, an affecting token of the love of the Father. It is to His wisdom and grace we owe it, that there is such an office; and in this man's accepting the office, and entering upon it,

we have an instance of His deep condescension and abounding love. This office looks to things pertaining to God, and it hath respect to the highest and dearest interests of the children of men. What a glorious Person must He be, who is counted worthy to take such an office, and who is found faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses was faithful in all his house! We are called to enquire,

II. What He has done? "After He had offered one sacrifice for sins." In the view of His Person that was last suggested, there is presented the link that connects what He is, with what He is here said to have done. It pertains only to priests to offer sacrifices, and it were not an unimportant definition of what a priest is, to say, he is one who offers sacrifices. Thus you see the propriety of adverting to the office He fills, ere we come to the consideration of what, in the discharge of the functions of the office, He has done. In turning, then, to this part of our subject, our attention seems due,

1. To that for which the sacrifice is offered. It is "for sins." Now, we would never have heard of sins, but for the revelation of the divine will in the Holy Scripture. You will find no mention made of sins properly so-called anywhere else. All creation is dumb on this point. The ingenuity of man is at fault here, though on occasions men appear to be using expressions that point to this thing, it will be found on close enquiry, that it is something else they mean. It is very plain, then, that unless you are brought to this source of light, you must be entire strangers to what sins are. The source of light may be outwardly exhibited to you, but if there be nothing else, you will still remain as much strangers to sins, as you were before. You must be brought subjectively near to the source of light. There is in this word an opening of the mind of the Holy One, on the subject of sins. This subject has been with Him from eternity. He has an infinite knowledge of it, and the whole glory of His being, the whole sufficiency of His blessedness, and the whole stability of His government, are concerned in sins. But, this opening of His mind regarding sins in His Holy Word, will not profit you, unless there be an opening of your souls to the reception

of it. There is a remarkable word in one of the minor prophets, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars." Sinners! the doors of your souls must be opened to receive the fire of the truth and mind of the Holy One, contained in His Word, if you are to obtain a knowledge of sins. By this means, and by this means alone, will you come to know the nature of sins. The nature of sins is infinitely evil. They are so accounted of by Him who knows what sins are, and whose judgment respecting them is according to truth. So soon as by the Spirit of all grace, who alone does the work, when your souls are opened to the fire of divine truth, and your minds circumcised into a new frame, and your judgments brought to harmony with the judgment of the Holy One, then, and not till then, do you spiritually apprehend the infinite evil nature of sin. There is in this matter a species of spiritual instinct, and where it is wanting, men are totally wanting in the apprehension of the innate and infinite evil of the nature of sin. You are often told, that the religion that prevails in our day is a poor worthless thing; in many cases it is not the length of notions in the head, but in its best state, in the most popular form it assumes, we can call it by nothing higher than idle fancies; it is nothing better than rational notions, forged upon the evil anvil of corrupt human nature. My dear people, you and I will be fuel for the wrath of the Holy One of Israel through eternity, if there be not created in our souls that which is endued with a peculiar instinct; and just as flesh, because it is flesh, is pained when it is pricked, so this nature endued with these instincts is pierced when sin approaches it. Were it possible for us to see the nature of the Holy One, oh! what infinite shrinking there would be from the most distant sight of sin! Look at His people! Look at Joseph, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Look at David, "Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God." Look at Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Are there people amongst us of this description? The people that are thus created shall praise the Lord, and no others. Oh! how precious they

are! It needs infinite tenderness and care to watch over them, and manage them; they are exceedingly brittle ware, easily hurt, and broken. "I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." But, oh, where are there such people? The show of most people's countenances in churches testifies, that they are at an infinite distance from anything of the sort.

Again, where the soul is opened to this pure and holy fire, there is a discovery of the number of sins. We are called to notice this, from the peculiar language that occurs in the text. Sometimes, the Scripture speaks of sacrifice offered for sin, here there is mention made of sacrifice offered for sins. If, therefore, we keep closely to our text, and yield ourselves to its guidance, whilst we must not overlook the nature of sins, we must attend also to the number and variety of sins. It is needless to speak of any possessing acquaintance with the number and variety of sins, unless they have, in the manner pointed out, learned the infinitely evil nature of sin itself; for, observe, however many and varied sins be, they are still sins, and it is the infinitely evil nature that is found in them that provokes the displeasure of the Holy One, and that grieves the heart of flesh, into which the soul is circumcised in the day of its regeneration. You may occupy yourselves by writing or speaking of sins original and actual; sins of heart, sins of speech, sins of behaviour; sins of youth, sins of middle age, and sins of riper years; sins of ignorance, and sins against knowledge; sins under the violent power of temptation, and sins deliberate and presumptuous; sins committed secretly, and sins committed openly; sins against God, and sins against neighbour, and sins against self; sins against the law, and sins against the Gospel. But, amidst all this talk or writing, there will be no knowledge of what you are writing of, or speaking about, unless there has been an insight into the infinitely evil nature of sin itself. He with whom in this matter you have to do has set your iniquities before Him, your secret sins in the light of His countenance; and He has formed His Word, so as to be a fitting instrument for bringing these sins before the soul. No man can do this to

another, neither can any man do it for himself. There will be always great darkness, no little confusion, and sad defects, when attempts are made by creatures to perform this task. But, He who has an intimate and absolutely perfect knowledge of sins, and who has provided this instrument of His Word for the very purpose of bringing them before the soul, can do it, and do it effectually. "I will set them in order before thee:" however numerous they be, however greatly involved, running into one another, and spreading over a long life, "I will set them in order before thee." Then the sins rise up in wonderful simplicity, and follow each other in regular succession. So the woman of Samaria testifies, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Now, are there amongst us a people who have been dealt with after this fashion, and who are in a condition to bear this testimony to Him who hath taken them in hand?

I remark yet farther, that where the doors of the soul are opened to the searching fire of the Word and the Spirit of God, there there is a sense of the infinite demerit of sins. It is here that you will detect the hollowness of men's professions, when they appear to descant upon the evil nature of sins, and it may be go out very extensively upon the number and variety of sins. Human nature may be educated and refined, so as to handle these matters in a way that will astonish people. Oh, let us bear in mind, that it is not the objective handling of divine truth, nor the hearing of it handled with skill and power, that is to profit us; it is its inward, powerful, saving effect upon our souls. It is possible for men to discourse upon these things, and yet in the secret of their hearts cherish the persuasion, that it would be a very hard thing to damn them for sins. We believe that most, if not all, who have their hearts opened in the way we have noticed, have a very sore battle to fight, both at the outset, and most of the way through, on this very point: it is natural for us, in our blindness and self-sufficiency to think, it is a very hard thing to punish so dreadfully what we are inclined to reckon a trifling offence, an oversight, a slip, a fault; nor need we wonder that, if men be ignorant of the evil nature of sin, they

should have hard thoughts about the punishment that is threatened and inflicted for its commission. The cure of these thoughts lies in being brought to judge of sin as He judges of it, who has pronounced the sentence. Why has He threatened, why has He actually laid upon sins a curse, if it be not that in His perfect and absolutely righteous judgment, He esteems sin deserving of that, and of nothing less. It is not for His gratification; we have His own oath that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked: He has no pleasure in the shedding of a drop of blood by the sword of His justice, viewed by itself, and as a matter of suffering on the part of those who endure it. You must consider Him as sitting upon the throne of judgment, as having sins before His eye, and weighing what they are, and what they deserve at His hand; because He is more concerned in sins than any of us, or than all creatures put together. He has a heavier stake in being right and upright in this matter, than all creatures in heaven or earth. If He judges unjustly or unfairly in this matter, He would be, if it were possible, the greatest sufferer. He would suffer more than all creatures put together. This serves to show, that if His curse is said to be due to every one sin, and all sins committed, then it is quite according to the demerit of sins. I have said those who have their souls opened in the way I have noticed, have a struggle to maintain on this matter. If it were possible for the eye of Jehovah to lose sight of Himself for an instant, He would for that instant lose sight of the infinite demerit of sin, and think of it as you do. What is the inference? If your souls and mine are away from the apprehension of His essential infinite beauty, we are sure to stumble with regard to the demerit of sin. The Lord Jesus was brought very near to this awful fire in the day when His Father dealt with Him as a sacrifice for sin; He looked into it in a way that it is impossible for us to express or apprehend; He beheld the wrath that was kindling like a tempest against Him, in a way that made His soul exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, so that His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the earth. Oh, what a sight it must have been, that He got of the wrath due to sin, when it affected Him in the cool

of the evening in this way! Yet, He never for a moment thought it was too much, or too hard. No, He had infinite complacency in it. We are Christians, if we get a little of this. We are not Christians, if we are strangers to it. This would make us tremble, this would make us lowly, this would break our hearts, this would make us modest, circumspect, and careful walking people. But, oh, these sights are for the most part sealed up in our day! If there be one or two here in the way of getting a little of them, you are partakers of very distinguished mercy; by faith, try and render according to the benefit. This is what His people would fain be at, for they know they have not firm and stable ground, unless they reach it. They would have all tempests that rage in their souls against Him stilled, and they desire with sweet composure to rest in all that is in Jehovah, but specially in His holy wrath against sin. That is their portion. Is it yours, my people?

2. The next point is the sacrifice He offered for sins. To pave the way for the discovery of what this one sacrifice was, it will be needful to explain what is meant by a sacrifice. In its simple acceptance, the term denotes something made accursed. You may be ready to say, looking at the term as it presents itself to you, is it not something made sacred? True, you may take that as the general signification of the word, but beneath this general signification there is the special one that is directly referred to in our text; it is made sacred in the way of being given up to destruction. Hence Cain was altogether at fault, in bringing the first fruits of the ground for a sacrifice. The length that he went was to make these fruits of the earth sacred, setting them apart from his own domestic use to the object of his worship; but he did not make them a sacrifice in the proper use of the term, for destruction can only obtain where there is life; for Scripture is full of the doctrine that the demerit of sin is such that nothing will be regarded as a suitable and satisfactory punishment of it, but the taking away of life. "The soul that sins, it shall die." Whenever you are looking at sin, though it should be glittering like the skin of a serpent beneath the rays of the mid-day sun, remember that beneath that, grim death

lies; or, when it is presented to you in a cup of pleasure, sparkling as wine effervescent, remember there is death in the cup, and if you drink it you will die. Or, when it offers itself to you in an easily obtained, but unjust profit, or momentary carnal ease, or gratification of some craving lust, however sweet the gratification of the lust may be, recollect, the sediment is death, it afterwards stings like a serpent, and bites like an adder. Now, the fruits of the earth that Cain brought had no life, they therefore could not be made a curse; for death cannot be except where there is life. So, sinners, if you come under the stroke of death which sin deserves, whatever life is in you will be taken from you, your eye will be dimmed so as to see the light of the sun no more, your souls will swoon away into the second death, and soul and body after the resurrection shall die, and be ever dying, and never dead. It is death, that divine justice exacts from you the moment you step into eternity, He will take away your life then! it is death He exacts of you in the morning of resurrection, He will take away your life then: it is death, He exacts of you when first you make your entrance into hell, He will take away your life then: and after thousands of years have rolled away, it is death that He exacts then, He takes away your life then. You will say, "What life will be in us? We would need to have thousands of lives." Yes, "every sacrifice will be salted with salt." You shall die and yet live, and live to die; you shall be eternally dying, and yet eternally living. Oh, is this not a weight enough to lay you prostrate in the dust? Holy Spirit! proceeding from the Father and the Son, wilt thou not come forth in irresistible sweet majesty, and bend stubborn hearts in mercy, that they may not be eternally slain with the sword of divine justice? Oh, are we not your best friends, that tell you these things, and warn you to escape? Will you not take part with us, take the warning, and seek to escape? "Flee," that is Gospel language; you will not hear it in eternity; there is no exhortation to flee there.

Having thus explained what is meant by sacrifice, we are called to enquire, what it is this man offered as His one sacrifice. The Scripture instructs us that it was

Himself. He sustains manifold, and at first view apparently conflicting relations. In ancient times, when a typical worship was maintained and set forward in order to foreshadow good things to come, there behoved to be a priest, and so "Behold the man." "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." A priest was washed; so the High Priest of our profession was baptised by John in the Jordan, "And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." I must exhibit the substance of the washings in the laver or the molten sea under the Old Testament economy. Is it not a comely sight? Do you not catch somewhat of His majestic step as He stood upon Jordan washing as the High Priest of His people's profession. Again, a priest behoved to be anointed with holy oil: and so, when He came up from His baptism, the heavens were opened, and He was anointed, not with material oil, but with the Holy Ghost, which was foreshadowed by the material oil: an emblem of Gospel grace, and He abode upon Him so that all His garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. And if He appear very dignified and comely in coming up from His baptism at the Jordan, what a comely spectacle does He exhibit when in the language of prophecy, He says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me!" Again, under the old economy, an altar was reared and prepared, for the sacrifice to be offered on. In this case, there is no material altar to be looked for, neither of stone or turf. "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." He who is Priest is altar too. How do we gather this? "The altar sanctifies the gift." What sanctified the gift He offered but Himself? Then the sacrifice was prepared for being offered, "And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." This gives us an insight into the meaning of that Scripture, "Behold the Lamb of God." God provides Himself a Lamb. The Israelites were instructed to draw forth and take a lamb

when they offered sacrifice. So this Lamb is of the Father's drawing forth and providing, and in keeping with these Scripture testimonies; the Scripture teaches us farther, that Jesus Christ gave Himself an offering for sins. "I and My Father are one." What the Father wills, He wills, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He works in drawing forth for Himself the Lamb provided, and I work as the priest, who brings forth and takes the Lamb provided. Now, when the sacrifice was provided, this was the order of procedure in regard to it: the high priest laid his hand upon the head of the sacrifice; this action was significant of a great Gospel doctrine you are accustomed to hear from day to day; it is brought out in this Scripture, "For He hath made Him to be sin who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." But is it not said, the priest laid his hand on the head of the sacrifice, and do not these passages teach generally that He was made sin, and specially that the Father caused to meet on Him the iniquities of His people? True, but recollect what is not expressly named: the priest would have no sins to lay upon the head of the animal, if the God of Israel had not been beforehand with him. You are not called to confess sins, not charged upon you, not imputed, or reckoned to you. Now, we have in the testimonies we have got, the doctrine clearly exhibited, that the Father imputed to Jesus Christ the sins of those in whose room He stood, and for whose redemption He gave Himself a sacrifice; and in what pertains properly to the priest's office, we have this farther precious truth exhibited, that the Lord Jesus Christ consented to take upon Himself what the Father caused to meet upon His head: thus the Father, as Judge, places sin to the account of the priest; and the priest, in discharging the functions of His office, lays these sins upon Himself as the sacrifice. Thus being made sin, though he knew no sin, according to the law, we have brought out already, He must die. The death in prospect was so terrible to Him, that He seemed, once and again, as if He would shrink from it. The language

He is represented as employing is most instructive; we know no way in which it could be more emphatically made known, what a terrible thing it is to sin against God. You think it is a light matter, because you are far, far away from the consuming fire; but the moment you come near to it, either in a work of grace, in clear saving convictions, or at last in an undone state, to perish for ever, it will no longer appear a light matter to you. "And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." What thou willest, that I am resolved and prepared to do. Is there no possibility of preserving that life? Must it be taken away? Must His Son, His only Son whom He loves, die? "Awake, O sword, smite the Shepherd." It pertains to the Father to inflict the curse, it belongs to Him to kill; here the type fails us; the high priest put the knife into the victim and shed its blood; let us beware of the impious imagination that "this man" put the knife into Himself, that took His life away; no, it is the Father's voice that says, "Awake, O sword, smite the Shepherd." How is it said, then, that He offered Himself? Thus, the Father could not take away His life unless He gave it. At the point of the sword, and in the moment of exacting the curse, and when that lovely life was to be taken away, there met the Father's will to kill and the Son's will to die. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." This is what He did, when He offered one sacrifice for sins.

III. We have now to notice where He is. "For ever sat down on the right hand of God." The "right hand of God" is a figurative expression denoting the highest glory, the widest dominion, and the greatest power which God confers. There is a glory that is not conferred, that cannot be conferred; but all the glory which God has to confer, all the dominion and power He has to bestow of the highest form, is emblematically set

forth by the "right hand." His sitting at the right hand of God intimates the valid title that He possesses to the glory, and dominion, and power that are denoted by the "right hand of God:" it intimates the claim that He prefers founded upon His right; it intimates the actual possession of that which He rightfully claims; and it intimates the rest and complacency which He has in the possession of His rightful claim. The expression "for ever" denotes the termination of all the toils, and sorrows, and sufferings, through which He passed to this state; it denotes the immutability of the state on which He has entered, and it intimates its perpetuity, "for ever sat down."

Now, how came He who was so deeply abased to be so highly exalted? It was through His deep abasement that He rose to such a height. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." He was crowned with thorns, that He might be crowned with glory: He was brought low, that He might be made high: He was stripped of all, that He might be invested with all. In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away; in His exaltation judgment will be brought forth to victory, and all right-hearted men will follow it. In His death, He was alone; in His life, an innumerable company will attend Him. In offering one sacrifice for sins, He gave up all; in sitting down at the right hand of God, He gains all.

IV. We have to notice what He expects, "From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." The Lord Jesus has enemies, they are many, and they are very various; in one point, however, they agree, they are agreed in their hatred to Him. Why do these enemies hate Him? They hate Him, because He is what He is, has done what He has done, and sits where He sits. Name any property of the Lord Jesus, any office He holds, any work He accomplishes, and sacrifice He makes, any glory He enjoys, you name that which is hateful to His enemies. His enemies, if they had Him in their power, would remove Him from sitting at the right hand of God, would undo His offering

Himself a sacrifice for sins, would annihilate the glory of His person.

These enemies have a lot awaiting them; they think not of it, they will not believe it, it awaits them nevertheless. They are to be made a footstool for His feet: they are to be brought very low, covered with shame, rendered subservient in the most debasing form to the will, and purpose, and glory of Him whom they sought to destroy. They would, if they could, make Him their footstool; retributive justice measures out to them the measure that they would measure to Him: they are made His footstool. He calmly, and joyfully, and patiently bides the time when they shall enter into that lot, "From henceforth expecting, till His enemies be made His footstool."

APPLICATION.

1. Learn the procuring cause of the death of Christ. Were there no sins, there would be no death. Were there no sins imputed to One that is sinless, there would be no sacrificial death. And were there no sins imputed to the Lord Christ, we never would have heard of the death of Christ. We say the truth, but it is only part of the truth, when we say, that sin was the procuring cause of the death of Christ; we are obliged to go farther, and say that it was the sins of His people, that were the procuring cause of Christ's death; the sins of His people placed to His account, so that He was to be held in law answerable for them; and by His own voluntary engagement He vowed to endure what was to be endured to the uttermost. Now, met as you are this day, is it not meet you should be reminded, that as many of you as have knowledge of these things may stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of what it is that led to the death of Christ? When you think of sins, you think of things infinitely evil, against which the fire of Jehovah's wrath burns with infinite vehemence, and which, all that He is is a pledge to us, He will not allow to escape. You must so account of sins also, else you will see no glory in the death of Christ, your hearts will be in no degree refreshed by that death; and how can you show it forth, in the ordinance of the Lord's

Supper, if you are ignorant of it, uninterested in it, indifferent about it?

2. See for what purpose the death of Christ was endured. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. But you will not understand what is meant by putting away sin, if sin be not present to you. Have you ever seen sin before God, as a thick cloud, intercepting the light of His countenance from your souls, and shutting out your prayer from His ear? Have you ever seen sins beneath the eye of your own conscience, your conscience looking at them, and troubling you because of what it discovers? Have you ever seen your sins in the light of the Word, that Word opening them up, as if it would tell all, that is within you, and all that is done by you? Have you ever seen your sins prospectively on a death bed, at the judgment seat, in eternity? If not, how can you understand what is meant, by putting away sin? A weighty matter, an arduous work! Jesus Christ did it, He did no more: it took Him, it took all He was, and all He had. The curse did not leave one leaf of that Plant of renown, it burned Him all up; it did not leave one particle of sap, it completely exhausted it, just like the fire that came upon Elijah's sacrifice. "Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." It did not leave one drop of blood in His veins, He was stretched in death, a lovely yet lifeless corpse: the slain of the Lord was there in that day. There was a slaughter made there beneath the avenging sword, that will never be made again. Tophet indeed is ordained of old, it is wide and large, and terrible will be the sacrifices that divine justice will make there; but all hell put together and continued to eternity, will exhibit what immeasurably falls short of the sight, the great sight seen upon the cross. He "bowed His head." He held it up till now, but now it must fall, the weight was so great. Will the sacrifice or the curse prevail? The curse must prevail. Will the victim or the fire prevail? The victim must yield. He bowed His noble head, His heart strings broke, His soul was delivered up to the safe keeping of His Father, that in virtue of the sacrifice

He offered, He might get it back with ineffable glory, and say: "I am He that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death." If it were not that I was the living One, I could not have died such a death as that. All the angels in heaven, if they had got into that wine press, would never have got out of it. But, if I had not died that death, I should not have the life I now have in glory. "Alive for evermore." "Wherefore He is able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and when the sacrifice of Himself is appropriated to your souls by faith, being applied by the gracious effectual work of the Holy Ghost, then your sins are put away.

3. See the glory into which this one sacrifice conducted Him who offered it. Oh, how deep the abasement, just as high is the exaltation! Where was He in His death? I cannot tell. Maybe He will let His people know some wonderful things, when He gets them home to His Father's house. Where is He in His life? "At the right hand of God." If you could tell me the opposite of the right hand of God, I might tell you where He was in His death. But here is a height and a depth, the angels desire to look into; but they cannot fathom the depth or measure the height. Never, never, never, will they get to the end of it, for it has no end. Oh, are you also desiring to look into these things; beginning the study in grace, and continuing it in glory for ever?

"This is Life Eternal"

(Preached 8th December, 1839).

JOHN xvii. 3.—"*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*"

IT was by the effectation of a knowledge which man could never attain, that he fell: it is by the communication of a knowledge which he could never conceive, that he is recovered. The objects of it are such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive; for unless a Divine revelation had told it, men never could have discovered the mystery of God, even of the Father and of Christ. But the knowledge of the objects, even after they are revealed, lies equally beyond the range of men's natural faculties. For as they are supernatural, so it is by supernatural faith they must be apprehended, and it is in supernatural light they must be contemplated. The knowledge thus obtained, is spiritual in its character, and holy in its nature: it comes from God in Christ, and it leads the soul back to Him, so that in His light it may see light. In adverting to the properties of this knowledge, in a previous discourse, it was found to be very simple, exceedingly clear, very certain, discriminating, powerful, sweet, and satisfying. We were called to think of the effects which it produces: and, first, as was observed, it is accompanied with supreme love to the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.

I go on now, in dependence on the grace of God, to observe, in the second place, as another effect which it produces, that it leads to fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

And, 1st, There is fellowship with the Father in His *love*. In the knowledge or faith of which we speak, there is involved an apprehension of the Father, in that peculiar character which He sustains in the economy of grace. Now in that character, He appears as the Fountain of the love in which lieth the spring of every saving benefit, and from which they all flow; and in this aspect does the soul contemplate Him when it is admitted to communion with Him.

And (1st), A believer has communion with God in the *glory* of His love. And wherein, brethren, does its peculiar glory consist?

[1.] It is eternal. This invests it with an awful solemnity, and suggests a view, which, by our feeble minds, is altogether incomprehensible. To think that before the foundations of the world were laid, ere ever He had formed the earth and the heavens, even from the beginning, His people were the objects of His love; how wonderful! "The Lord hath appeared to me of old, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

[2.] It is infinite. We may attempt to conceive of its cause, but we soon lose ourselves, for it lieth in the absolute sovereignty of the Divine will, even of Him who giveth not account of His matters. We have people that cavil at the sovereignty of the love of God, and, in the proud imagination of their hearts, think that it must be because of something in, or done by the creature that God loves one and passes by another. But these persons do not know God, and therefore have no right to talk of such matters: let them first go and learn the character of God, and then they will speak from knowledge, and not from ignorance: "The Lord loved you because he loved you." "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau." The love of God is infinite in its *holiness*. To many it is an easy thing to believe that God loves them, by which they mean no more than that He will pass by their sins, and bestow comfort upon them, and take them to heaven. The very idea of holiness as an immeasurable opposition to sin, dashes all their ideas of Divine love, and robs them of all the confidence they

have in it. But they thus show that they know nothing of the glory of the love of God: for its glory consists, as in other things, so especially in its holiness; and this brings to view the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, in whom sin receives the heaviest condemnation, and yet Divine love opens for itself the freest egress. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. But it is infinite in its *intensity*. His people have sometimes a hard task to believe, that there is any love to them in God, and poor burdened sinners think it is impossible He can love them. But the view of its sovereignty should quiet the apprehensions they have on this head; for it is to limit the Holy One of Israel, to set any bounds whatever to the objects of His love. On the other hand, believers are ready to be upset with a little of the love of God, and are sick at heart because of its greatness. But oh! brethren, the largest draught of the love of God which you ever received, is not so much to what is in Him, as is a drop of water to the depths of the ocean! Nay, all that the spirits of the just made perfect have yet enjoyed of this love, is as nothing compared with what is in God. He loves with the entire intensity of His heart; and hence it is, "He rests in His love." He can find nothing on which He can rest but what is infinite, and therefore His love is infinite: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you."

[3.] It is immutable. To judge by the fears and feelings of His children, you would suppose that the love of God is as changeable as are the frames of their minds. They are now well persuaded of His love; in a few minutes they are in great doubt about it; and by-and-by they question its existence, or deny its possibility. How can God love such vile and rebellious creatures? But this, O friends! is to think God altogether such a one as yourselves. And the root of the evil is your self-righteousness, which leads you to look for the foundation of Divine love in you, not in Him. Let the soul be established in the truth that God loves because He loves, and then is the way prepared for admitting that it is, and must be, immutable. And

were it not so, who could be saved? For oh, the provocations which believers daily offer to God! Sin, brethren, is strong, exceeding strong; but all the sin that ever has been, or ever will be, is not able to extinguish the flame of the love of God: "I am Jehovah; I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed:" "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

Now, such are a few hints as to the glory of the love of the Father. We say that the man who possesses the knowledge that is eternal life, hath fellowship with Him in these views of it: for being one with Christ, and interested in His righteousness, the Lord doth at times pass by, and proclaim His name before him; or, to change the figure, He puts him into the cleft of the rock, and as He passes by He removes His hand, and lets the soul see His back parts; for no man can, in the present state, see His face and live. And this manifestation of the glory of the love of God, is received by the soul unto its humbling, delighting, and satisfying: "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." Do any of you say, Alas! we know nothing of this experience? My friends, do you know anything of the *want* of it? To feel the want of it is the next best thing to the having it: for "he hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away."

(2.) The soul that possesses the knowledge of the Father and of His Son Jesus Christ that is eternal life, hath communion with the Father in the *sweetness* of His love. To the carnal heart, nothing is more distasteful than the love of God. You will be astonished to hear this, but so it is. Let men form their own ideas of God and His love, and they will delight in them; but all this is mere idolatry, the worship of the fancies of their own imaginations. But let the God of glory be declared to them, and let His love as it is revealed be set before them, and they are mad with rage; they sink into sullen indifference, or are lifted up in insolent contempt. The peculiar glory of Divine love is its sovereignty, and its holiness; and I put it to you, whether there be not persons here, who cannot brook these views of it. We may declaim as long as we please on the

love of God, and not offend them; but the moment we speak of Him as, in His love, taking this man, and leaving that, giving this blessing, and withholding that, they are almost ready to stone us. We may illustrate our point in another way: The great enemy never disturbs those who preach, and those who believe that God loves those who are sober, and upright, and industrious, and hates those who are drunkards, revellers, and given to all manner of wickedness. But let men preach that God loves sinners, even the chief, not because of their sins, but because of His own good pleasure, and Satan rages like a lion. And the more clearly and powerfully these doctrines are proclaimed, the more furiously does he roar. Never was the love of God brought so near to the demons of darkness, as when the possessed were brought to Christ; and, see the result: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

But the very thing that is wormwood and gall to the devil, and the devil's children, is sweeter than honey from the comb to the true people of God, or those who possess the knowledge of which the text speaks. They know by bitter experience the truth of what I have said: for they too have carnal hearts, and they are oft-times stoutly bent against the love of God. It may be at this very moment, the grief and the burden of many present, that all the preacher can say on the subject does not engage their hearts, but rather make them worse. But, brethren, happy are you, if through grace you have been brought thus far: deliverance is not far distant; it will come in its proper season; and then will you feel that there is a sweetness in the love of God that passes understanding. And, observe, these very attributes of it which are most offensive to the carnal heart, will be peculiarly delightful to you. You will rejoice in its eternity, infinity, and immutability; but most of all will you delight in its sovereignty and holiness; and you will take up the call of the psalmist as your own: "Oh! bless the Lord ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." "For thy love is better than wine."

(3.) This knowledge leads to communion with the Father in the *power* of His love. To this unregenerate men are entire strangers; and that, too, though they may wear a very fair and plausible profession. They may speak of the love of God, how great it is, how precious; but ask them what effect it has upon them, and they cannot tell. In fact, they live from day to day, and from week to week, quite independent of it. They do not need it to fit them for their prayers; they can say them without it: they do not need it to conduct their business, to associate with their fellowmen, no, nor even to observe the ordinances of the house of God. But not so those who have the knowledge we speak of: they are utterly powerless without it. They can sin well enough, and ruin themselves without it, but they can do no good: and not only so, but they sometimes feel as if their whole nature were stirred up to resist this love; and they think that sin is so strong that nothing can subdue it. But let them have communion with God in the power of His love, and their hearts of ice are at once melted, their souls that were dead are quickened, and they that could do nothing, now can do everything. Let the Spirit of grace reveal to their souls the glory and power of Divine love, and guide them suitably to apprehend and feel it, and their doubts vanish, faith is established, their affections are loosed, and they return, singing, "Oh the height and the depth, the breadth and the length, of the love of God! It passeth knowledge:" "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

In the second place, they that have the knowledge of the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, have communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. And they have communion with Him in *His grace:* "For it hath pleased the Father"—and that in His love, of which we have been speaking—"that in Christ should all fulness dwell." As He Himself is the Fountain of love, in which love He designs all the good that sinners receive, so Christ is the Fountain of grace, as the medium through which His favour flows to lost men. And accordingly, to fit the soul for communion with the Lord Jesus Christ in this character, there is communi-

cated a knowledge of Him in His person as God-man, in His character as the Messiah, in His mission and work as the Saviour of sinners. Now, where this knowledge is had, there is communion with Christ in His grace. And, 1st, A believer has communion with Christ in the *riches* of His grace. I might speak of the communion which the soul has with Christ in His personal grace, or that peculiar beauty that adorns His character. But this was spoken to under the head of the objects of knowledge, when it was shown that He is the fairest of the sons of men, yea altogether lovely. I therefore speak at present of what we may call His official grace. By grace, remember, is understood unmerited favour: the name is applied sometimes to the favour, and sometimes to the effects it produces. Now in both views the grace of Christ is infinitely rich. He bears infinite favour to His people, and He bestows infinite favours upon them.

(1.) We have *redeeming* grace. This is as old as the eternal covenant; for there, Christ represented the chosen seed, stood in their room, and took upon Him their burdens and their obligations. It was manifested in the fulness of time, when He came forth made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law: it was wonderfully displayed in the work which He performed, in fulfilling all righteousness, and in bearing the penalty due to sin, by which He completely satisfied the justice of God, and laid a foundation on which God might be just, and yet justify the ungodly who believe in Jesus: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

(2.) There is *converting* grace. The persons of the redeemed are dead in sins, held captives by Satan, the willing slaves of the world; they have neither the inclination, nor the power to turn to Christ, that they may take possession of the purchased redemption. They are like the Israelites, who lay in the bondage and affliction of Egypt, till the Lord, in remembrance of His covenant, was pleased to visit them; He gives them a

heart of flesh; He convinces them of their sin, shows them their misery, discovers His glory as a Saviour, renews their will, and enables and inclines them to receive Him on the warrant of the gospel declaration, and thus are they brought to Himself, and made one with Him by faith: "The Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God:" "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

(3.) I might speak of *justifying* grace: by which, in virtue of their oneness with Christ by faith, believers have forgiven them all trespasses, are accepted in the sight of God as righteous, and declared heirs of eternal life: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

(4) I might speak of *sanctifying* grace: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

(5.) Of *establishing, comforting,* and *perfecting* grace: "My grace is sufficient for thee." "And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

In Christ, there is grace for every situation in which a man may be placed. There is grace for kings, that they may rule in the fear of God: "By me kings reign and princes decree justice;" there is grace for subjects, that they may obey: there is grace for masters, and grace for servants; for husbands and wives; for parents and children; for pastors and people: there is grace for the rich, that they may learn not to trust in uncertain riches; and grace for the poor, that they may be content with such things as they have; grace for the old, the middle-aged, the young: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not:" grace for prosperity, and grace for adversity; for health and for sickness; for safety and for danger; for life and for death. There is grace for every stage of the Christian life: there is milk for babes, and strong meat for those that are of full age; grace for those that are in light, and those

that are in darkness; for those that are at liberty, and those that are in bondage; for those that are spiritually-minded and those that are carnally-minded. The time would fail me were I to speak of all that is in Him: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

And then there is an immeasurable amount of grace of every kind in Christ. The message was sent to those in the highways and hedges, and they were brought in, "but yet there is room." The church has been receiving out of His fulness grace for grace for hundreds of years, and yet the riches of Christ are still unsearchable: it is impossible to exhaust this fountain. We have a complaint, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name;" but no complaint that they have asked too much. It is like the oil, which ran so long as there was a vessel to fill it, and was stayed only when no more vessels could be found: so the grace of Christ will flow, so long as there is an empty sinner to receive it, and will be stayed only when the church shall be finished, and the proud consigned to destruction: "My God will supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

In the second place, the man that possesses this knowledge has communion with Christ in the *freeness* of His grace. And this is the great stumbling-block to the natural heart, the rock on which many split to their eternal destruction: they cannot take in the idea of absolutely free grace in Christ, and therefore they come with a price in their hand, and are rejected. It is a matter of great difficulty to those also who are truly awakened, and deeply distressed about their souls; they say, How can Christ have anything to do with us, who are so vile and unprofitable, and who with all our vileness have no heart to receive Him? Now, brethren, to sweep away all such ideas from the foundation on which they rest, we have to declare unto you that the grace of Christ is absolutely free. It will not do to bring works of law, that is, to think that because you have never been left to fall into very gross sins, therefore you may hope that Christ will be gracious unto

you; for "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." It will not do to appeal to the earnestness with which you have sought Him, for that has in it sin enough to condemn you: it will not do to trust to the tears you have shed, for your very tears need to be washed in the blood of the Lamb: it will not do to speak of *your* willingness to receive Him, for any willingness you have is of the flesh, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God: if you are determined to speak of qualifications for the grace of Christ, then speak only of your sin, your blindness of mind, your hardness of heart, your unbelief, your carnality, your wickedness. But the grace of Christ is so free, that qualifications are out of the question, and alien to its very nature: "If it be of works, then is it no more of grace, otherwise grace is no more grace." The truth is, that the grace of Christ is communicated to men without any distinction in them; the ground of it lies in the free love of the Father, and the rich grace of the Son: "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

But to show the absolute freeness of this grace, men have actually need of grace to receive it. The grace of Christ is given without money and without price, but what is it that receives this? It is the *grace* of faith: so that if you were to give a beggar a little money, and to give him at the same time the inclination and power to receive it, you would have some illustration of our subject; and yet it would we a very faint one; for the grace of Christ is bestowed not only upon those who have no inclination to receive it, but upon those who have a strong aversion to it. Now what, brethren, becomes of your objections and your difficulties? You will tell me of your sinfulness, and corruption, &c., but what of that? It is indeed no reason why Christ should bestow His grace upon you, but neither is it a reason why He should withhold it from you. In yourselves by nature, you will never see anything that is a ground of hope; but what you do not see in yourselves, you may see in Christ: for there is in Him, both the grace and the foundation on which He bestows it: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

In the 3rd place, the man that possesses the knowledge that is eternal life, has communion with Christ in the *power* of His grace. Be it so, you will say, that the grace of Christ is so rich and so free, yet you cannot come to Him. But He can come to you. And oh! brethren, mark it well, this is in every case the way in which He dispenses His grace. You are ever ready to think, that the general rule is, that those who come to Christ receive, and that if ever He come to those who cannot come to Him, it is rarely, and by way of exception to the general rule. But this is a mistake: there never was a soul that cast one longing look to Christ, but in consequence of His first giving of His grace to that soul. Peter did not look to Christ and mourn, till Christ looked on him and melted his heart. Paul says, "By the grace of God, I am what I am"—By grace, I have a sense of need, and desire of supply, and concern for the want of it. Now, should you not do like the impotent man, who lay at the pool of Bethesda; there he lay, and Christ came to him; so lie you at the pool of ordinances till Christ comes to you, and then you will know the power of His grace: "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

Now, such is a very imperfect sketch of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which the soul has communion with Him. For He is pleased to reveal Himself in His glory to the soul, and to cause the soul to apprehend the revelation. He communicates of His grace to the soul, and causes the soul to receive the communication. He says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." He gives life to the dead Lazarus; and Lazarus, at His mandate, leaves the grave, and returns to the light of day. He gives light and liberty to the prisoners; and then, at His bidding, they come forth and show themselves: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

The communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, we have said, is the effect of the knowledge of which the text speaks. He that is totally destitute of

the knowledge is, and must be, a stranger to the love of God, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ: he has no evidence but that the wrath of God abideth on him, and he is in a totally graceless state. To some it may appear a small matter, what be the kind of religious knowledge they have, provided only they are not found ignorant; but, brethren, there is a kind of knowledge which is equally abominable in the sight of God, and equally unprofitable to you with ignorance, and that is the knowledge which you get without the Spirit of God, and the experience of the truth: for you may heap up to yourselves all that men and books, ministers and sermons can give you, and yet be left without the love of God and the grace of Christ; and to be left without them is to be poor indeed. But, observe, it is not always, that those who have the knowledge of which we speak, enjoy communion with the Father in His love, and Christ in His grace: they may be deserted; they may appear to be forgotten; they may be sorely tried; they may have no sensible communion, and may question whether they ever had any. But "at evening-tide it shall be light;" and a restoration of faith, an increase of knowledge, leads to renewal of fellowship: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

APPLICATION.

1. We are here furnished with a test by which to try our religious knowledge. We have many amongst us, that profess to have some knowledge of God and His Son Jesus Christ: they surely are not to be reckoned as altogether ignorant of this subject. Now, my friends I have to ask you, Does your knowledge ever lead to communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ? Does it ever lead you to feel your want of this, and urge you to desire and seek after it? I am pretty sure, that the consciences of many, at this moment, whisper that they do not know what I mean by communion with God. Some people say they have this knowledge, who have no prayer. Is it not so, you that never bend the knee in the closet, nor in the family? Some say their

prayers, and there the matter ends; but whether they have communion with God or not, they cannot tell. Now, brethren, it is needless to mince the matter. We tell you plainly, that such of you as are in this condition have not a particle of true knowledge; and the only difference between you and the most ignorant heathen is, that you have a mass of carnal knowledge to condemn you, which he has not. All knowledge in religion that does not come from God, and lead to God, will be swept away with the besom of destruction. I know there are amongst us those, who admit the truth of all I say, and who will be ready to take occasion from it to mourn over their sad state; for they have been taught to make no account of any knowledge, which does not lead to communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. My friends, it is grace which could bring you to this: be thankful for what you have; and to you that thus have shall be given, and you shall have abundance. And let the people of God learn, to treat as so much rubbish that knowledge which terminates in self, or the world, and does not terminate in God.

2. We see the ample and solid ground on which sinners are called to build their hopes: it is on the love of God, and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Adam, and by their own sin, men are ruined; and you may look till your eyes start from their sockets, you never will see in yourselves anything but causes of perdition; and if you see anything else, it is a fond delusion that will burst to your dismay one day. But oh! turn to the economy of grace: and if love that is infinitely glorious, and unspeakably sweet, and irresistibly powerful, and grace that is rich, free, and weighty, can save, then hope in God. I know you will be ready to say, you are this guilty, and that vile, and the other bad thing; but what has that to do with the love of God, which has its spring in His own sovereign will? Your sins cannot change His pleasure. And what is it to the grace of Christ? Your sins cannot exhaust or defy it. Be exhorted then to come and draw water out of this well of salvation; for it is ever free and ever satisfying. And if you say, The well is deep, and I have nothing to draw with,

3. I observe, in the third place, that we hence see our absolute need of the Spirit of grace. To some it may appear strange, that I have not mentioned communion with the Holy Ghost; but, in fact, this has pervaded the whole of my discourse; for I showed to you that there can be no knowledge without Him, and it is an effect of the knowledge communicated and maintained by Him, that the soul hath communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. He is therefore the Agent that worketh all in all. Now, let me call on you that have the Spirit of Christ, to seek to have Him more abundantly.

"The Spirit of Grace"

(Preached 29th December, 1839).

FIRST SERMON.

ZECHARIAH xii. 10.—"*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*"

THE Spirit of grace is very glorious in Himself, and most glorious is the work which He accomplishes in the economy of redemption. The fulness of Christ is open to Him; and thence does He receive those unsearchable treasures, which it hath pleased the Father should dwell in Him. In His infinite condescension, He comes with them to the children of men, as they lie in the kingdom of darkness, polluted with sin, and condemned to destruction; who, so far from having any desire after such a visit, or any regard for the end for which it is paid, are full of the most bitter hostility to the whole subject. We need not wonder, that the entrance of such a person into this region of corruption and death, should create a strange sensation, and produce a deep commotion. It is like carrying the light of a torch into a den of thieves, the very sight of which occasions the greatest consternation and alarm. For, when the Spirit of grace comes to a soul, the great adversary awakes, and struggles to retain his prey; the lusts of the flesh, like so many owls, are disquieted and stirred up, and the whole powers of darkness are thrown into a state of agitation. Nor is it until the Lord of glory appears, that there is anything like order or peace restored.

We endeavoured to show, in a *previous discourse on this text, that the Spirit of grace having convinced a man of his sinfulness and misery, enlightens his mind in the knowledge of Christ; and in illustrating this point, it was remarked, first, that He enlightens in the knowledge of the glory of Christ, viz. the glory of His person, His offices, His state. Secondly, that He enlightens in the knowledge of the grace of Christ—its nature, sufficiency, freeness, efficacy, immutability. The first effect commonly produced by this illumination is, a sense of great darkness, as to the glory of Christ. Hence Saul, after the vision on the way to Damascus, was blind three days and three nights. We therefore hope well of those amongst us, that complain of their blindness to the glory of Christ, and mourn their incapacity to believe on His name. It will be a great astonishment, as well as a heavy grief to us, if such persons are not saved. "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." A further effect of this Divine illumination is, a feeling of extreme vileness and worthlessness. We have an instance of this in the prophet Isaiah, who on seeing the glory of Christ cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips." We may apply this for the encouragement of those who are groaning under a sense of their desperate wickedness, and who perhaps never feel it more sensibly than when the glory of Christ is set before them. "Behold I am vile! what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." A third effect of Divine illumination is, to produce great self-loathing, and hatred of sin. We have this exemplified in the case of Job: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." He that is not heartily sick of sin, and desirous to get rid of it, root and branch, whatever may be his convictions, and the distress they occasion, is still a stranger to Christ. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

I proceed, however, in dependence on Divine counsel and support, to observe in the *third* place, that the Spirit

* Volume I, page 23.

of grace enlightens men in the knowledge of the *work* of Christ. We have seen, that, in His person, He is unspeakably glorious, having in Him the fulness of Divine beauty, and the perfection of human excellence. We have seen, that, in His grace, He is in every way worthy of the confidence of sinners, no matter how heavy their burdens, and how deep their guiltiness. But now, we are called to look at His character as manifested in a work, on which are suspended the glory of the Highest, and the redemption of man.

And perhaps, we cannot better introduce this subject, than by glancing at the *substitution* on which it proceeds. To the truly awakened soul, it sometimes looks as if it were impossible he could be saved, the obstacles are so numerous and so formidable. The time indeed was when, like the rest of his fellowmen, he imagined it the easiest thing in the world to be saved: he had only to get his sins pardoned; his character a little improved; and when he died to be taken to heaven; and that was all. Now, is not that the feeling of many present, at this very moment? Oh, accept the word of warning, and flee from your carnal confidence, as the most dangerous thing that is about you, because the most dishonouring to Christ, and to the Father who sent Him. The man, however, who has been convinced of his sin by the Spirit of grace, sees that he has, by his first apostasy in Adam, by his life of ungodliness, and, more than all, by his rejection of Christ, offered an infinite offence to the Divine Majesty. He sees that Divine justice requires righteously, that the sin he has done shall be visited with the curse, and he is ready to think, that there is nothing for him but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

His case becomes more desperate, when, to quiet his troubled conscience, and to pacify Him whom he has offended, he sets himself to keep the law, and finds that the more he strives to be better, he only grows the worse; and that the higher he seeks to rise in holiness, the deeper he sinks in corruption. He now sees that, though all his past sins were forgiven and forgotten, he would scarcely have received the boon, when he would

plunge himself anew into debt, and become as miserable as before. And by-and-by he discovers that God cannot accept for his justification, anything that has the least stain of sin in it, nor can He accept of obedience to part of His law, without obedience to the whole; nor can He accept of righteousness at all unless it be for the past, the present, and the future. By these views, the man is brought to his wits' end: he wonders if ever there was a creature in such a dilemma: awakened to the demands of the law, anxious to settle them, but at every step dishonouring God, breaking the law, despising Christ, and ruining his own soul. Oh! the depth and bitterness of the cry he raises, "What must I do to be saved?"

Now, brethren, it is in such trying circumstances as these, that the Spirit of grace, in His own peculiar light, unfolds the mystery of Christ's *substitution*. We may illustrate this point by a very simple comparison. Suppose that one of you were drowned in debt, had nothing to pay, became utterly bankrupt, and were about to have all your goods sold, your family cast on the world, and yourselves thrown into prison; and that, in this state of matters, a benevolent and wealthy individual stepped forward and said, I will go into his shoes—I will be the debtor—let him go free; and that the creditor, assured of his excellence, and wealth, and liberality, accepted of the offer, you would watch with interest what followed, nor would you be content, till the discharge from all obligations were put into your hands. Now we have shown that the case of *sinners* (and when we say sinners we mean every man, woman, and child in this assembly in their natural state) is very similar to this. And what is to be done? It is out of the question for you to discharge the debt; one single sin is sufficient to send you into eternal banishment from God, and the glory of His power; and though you were to labour for a thousand years, with all the might you possess, and all the means you can obtain, you could not produce one act of obedience to the law, but must, in your very efforts, be sinking deeper and deeper every hour into guilt and ruin, for "the law worketh

wrath;" and "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."

But, in this condition, the Son of God incarnate, in glory ineffable, with riches unsearchable, from love unspeakable, steps forward, and says to the Father—the God whom sinners have offended, and at whose hand they deserve nothing but wrath to the uttermost—I will go into their room. Let all their sins be laid upon me; I will bear them. Let all their obedience be upon me; I will render it. Let all their concerns be upon me; I will manage them. The Father loves the Son; He knows His worth, His sufficiency, His grace; and He accepts Him as the substitute of poor, bankrupt, perishing sinners. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire." "Then said I, Lo I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."

(1.) Let us look, brethren, at the origin of Christ's substitution. And here we find a very deep and solid foundation, on which to rest in it with confidence, for it originated in the infinite wisdom of God Himself. "I have found David my servant." "I have laid help upon one that is mighty." "*The Lord* hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." We have thus the strongest assurance that His substitution is acceptable; for it is of the creditor's own choice. The sons of Jacob, first Reuben, then Judah, offered to be surety for Benjamin, but Jacob hesitated, though at last he yielded. Had he himself chosen one of them to be surety, he could not have drawn back, without reflecting on his own wisdom in choosing, and on the fitness of the object of his choice. To question the sufficiency of Christ to be the substitute of any sinner who lays hold of Him, is to despise the wisdom of the Father, and the worth of Christ. We accordingly find the Father testifying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(2.) The substitution of Christ is in its nature voluntary. The Father chose Him, and freely did He consent. He was under no obligation to sinners: He could get no benefit from them. In His love, free, sovereign, and everlasting love, did He become surety

for them. "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it."

(3.) The substitution of Christ is in its extent complete. The whole case of His people became His case: not a particle of sin was left out of the account; not an iota of obedience was deducted from the mighty sum. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Let us now look at the work which, as the substitute of sinners, He performs. In general, that work consists in the full satisfaction of Divine justice: for if that be done, all is done; if God be well pleased, sinners must be saved, for their only danger, and their whole danger, arises from His displeasure: "In his favour is life;" in His wrath is death. Now Divine justice required, that the wrath due to sin shall be borne. The Lord Christ accordingly suffered the wrath of God. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd." He spared Him not: He died, the just for the unjust.

But farther, Divine justice required that the law should be obeyed; and to this obedience it is indispensable that there be perfect purity of nature, and perfect holiness of heart, and perfect righteousness of life. The Lord Christ rendered all this. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

In regard to this wonderful work, I observe, 1st, that the Spirit of grace shows the soul, that by it God is glorified: by which I do not mean, that any glory is given to His nature which did not before belong to Him; for "who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" I mean, that the glory of His name is manifested, or made to appear in the

eyes of an admiring universe. The thing that presses heavily upon truly awakened sinners is, that by their sin they have dishonoured the name of God. And the only way in which they think His name can be vindicated is, in their eternal perdition; for they see and feel, that it is a righteous and seemly thing in God, to cast for ever away from him, those who have wickedly cast Him away from them. In the work of Christ, however, a higher vindication of the name of God is accomplished than can be by the perdition of your souls, or that of all the creatures that ever existed: for what does that perdition say, but that sin is so very hateful to God, that He will destroy His own creatures in whom it is found? And to every person capable of appreciating it, it must be an awful sight, to see men that were originally made in the image of God, and fitted for His service, eternally banished from His presence; and they must return from the contemplation of the sad spectacle, with the conviction, that it is indeed an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God. But, brethren, what is all that, to the solemn and affecting scene that was exhibited in Gethsemane and on Calvary? For there, the only begotten Son of God was wounded, bruised, and afflicted; the billows of the Father's wrath rolled in upon His soul, in quick and terrible succession, till He was ready to sink under them; the light of the Father's countenance, in which He supremely delighted, and in which He found His highest satisfaction, was hid from Him: and there was presented to the intelligent creation, a sight such as never was seen before, and never will be seen again—a Divine person bowed down, and bruised, and slain, under the wrath of God! Oh! with what feelings must spectators return from this solemn scene? And, if God appear in the glory of His holiness, and justice, and truth, in casting out of His sight a creature, who can tell the glory in which He appears, in casting out of His sight His well-beloved Son? "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."

But, if the glory of the wrath of God against sin, in other words, of His holiness and justice, appears in the work of Christ, not less conspicuous is the glory of His love to sinners. And this, brethren, is the wonderful

thing about the cross of Christ, that a more awful demonstration of Divine wrath is given than in hell itself, and yet a more affecting manifestation of Divine love than in heaven itself. For "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Showing that His Son is better than all, and greater than all. To a distressed and oppressed sinner, it is a hard thing to believe that there is, or that there can be, in God, anything but wrath against him; and viewed in himself, it is quite true; for, in His wrath against sin, God is immutable: "He will by no means clear the guilty." But the question is settled in the death and obedience of Christ; and there it is shown, in a light at once awfully glorious, and irresistibly attractive, that there is in God, infinite love to sinners in Christ. Now, if you cannot discover the love of God here, you can discover it nowhere else. If the death of Christ will not convince you, we have no stronger argument to produce. If you will not yield to this, you will yield to nothing: for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:" "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us:" "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And this it is, which renders the sin of unbelief so peculiarly aggravated, and, if persisted in, irreparably ruinous. I know that, in making this statement, I send into the hearts of not a few a piercing arrow, that is full of bitterness to their souls. But, dear brethren, I must not spare your feelings, at the expense of truth and your safety. I proclaim it, with a voice which I would that the Spirit would carry to every heart, that if the love of God be not seen in the cross of Christ, it will never be seen; for "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."

2nd. I remark farther, that the Spirit of grace shows the soul, that by the work of Christ the law is magnified. The effect of a real work of conviction is, to make a man jealous for the honour of the Divine name; and salvation he cannot receive, far less enjoy, but through a channel which maintains it. But it has the farther

effect, of making him most tender about the claims of the Divine law. And the very man who before condemned its authority, set its curse at defiance, and trampled upon its requirements, cannot have peace, will not take salvation, unless in every point, it be fully maintained and honoured. Thus it is, he shows to all who are able to interpret aright his experience, that he is partaker of a new nature; for, before he would have rejoiced if the law were abolished altogether, and he were allowed to take his full swing of iniquity, without any fear of the judgment to come. But now, he is grieved that his heart rebels against it, that his life is opposed to it, and that instead of obeying it, he does nothing but transgress it. To such a man, the Spirit's view of the righteousness of Christ is peculiarly precious; for he sees in it wonderful satisfaction to the *penalty* of the law. In the death of Christ, there is exhibited the rare sight of one bearing the wrath of God due to sin, with a heart full of supreme love to Him whose hand is lifted up to inflict the stroke:—a sight which you will seek in vain to find amongst the lost in hell; for there every heart is full of the most envenomed hatred to the law that condemns, and the Judge that punishes. And oh! how honourable does the law thus appear in its heavy penalty! How lovely in its sentence of deep condemnation! and how worthy of love, in the curse it pronounces upon sinners! Men think it is undue severity to punish one sin with infinite wrath: their proud hearts rise in rebellion against the doctrine when it is proclaimed; they delude themselves with the notion, that God is not the Being He is described by a certain class of preachers. And, as what men wish to be true, they easily believe to be true, they soon persuade themselves that no evil will befall them. I doubt not, that many who now hear me are lulled into this deceitful peace, and as if they are entrenched in an impregnable fortress, they are unmoved by all I can say: Why, God will not do evil, at least to us: it would be unjust to cast us amongst the very dregs of society: that we should have for our eternal associates murderers, adulterers, thieves, blasphemers! But look to the cross of Christ, and see the meek and holy Lamb of God

bowing to the stroke of Divine justice, and receiving, not only without a murmur, but with entire approbation of this procedure, the sword of vengeance into His bosom; and tell us, O sinner, "if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

But as for you, dear brethren, who are concerned about the honour of the Divine law, who feel in yourselves the evidence that the penalty is just, and who cannot get relief, who cannot enjoy peace, unless it be endured, if you wish to honour the law, then look to Christ; for in His sufferings and death, there is an honour given to the law which you never could give; and in them, there is more than can be given by all that you could endure, through a ceaseless eternity. I would press this point upon you; for Christ hath magnified the law, and made it honourable.

And not less precious to the truly awakened soul, is the view which the Spirit of grace imparts, of the satisfaction rendered by Christ, to the *precept* of the law. I dare say most of you feel, when perfect obedience is insisted upon, that the demand is quite extravagant; and because you are utterly incapable of rendering it, therefore you conclude, in spite of all that may be said to the contrary, that it is not demanded. Now, brethren, it is a small matter that you turn round, and to their faces call the ministers of the gospel liars,—though, considering that we have given to the subject the most serious consideration, and have no interest in misstating it, you might pause before you laid against us such a charge,—but how will you answer for it, that you call the God of truth a liar? For He tells every one of you, and that in the plainest terms, that if you give not to the law perfect obedience, you must die the death: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." We need nothing more to prove that a man is an enemy of God, not yet truly awakened to his state, if he does not feel that unless the law be perfectly fulfilled, he cannot be saved. The truly awakened, the spiritually enlightened feel this. For a time, indeed, they may try what they can do, by their own resolutions and efforts, to quiet conscience and please God; but they come to see that,

let them weave as industriously as they may, and adorn as beautifully as they can, the result of all their toil is filthy rags: they are led to abhor their own works, as loathsome in their own eyes. And what then must they be in the sight of Him, in whose eyes the heavens are not clean, and who chargeth His angels with folly? "If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things."

In the obedience of Christ, the glorious Substitute of sinners, the Spirit of grace shows them there is everything which the precepts of the law require. And this proves at once the equitable and the unalterable nature of its demands. Had it been possible to alter or bring them down, why should every jot and tittle be exacted from the Son of God? But see how very great is the honour conferred on the law, in having a subject of such dignity placed under it! And see how hateful is the pride, how daring the rebellion of those who refuse to submit to it, or who give to it obedience when and in what measure they please! "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake."

In the 3rd place, the Spirit of grace shows the soul, that the work of Christ is exactly suited to the condition of sinners. The reason why men fall into such grievous mistakes in regard to the work of Christ is, that, trusting to their own foolish hearts, and despising the light of the Word of God, they sadly err in regard to their natural state. The Socinians imagine that a created Saviour will suit them. The Papists think that good works will profit them. Nominal Protestants dream that an orthodox creed will save them. Pharisees think that morality will be of some use to them; and multitudes who belong to an evangelical church think if they believe, no matter where they get their faith, nor what be its nature, that will do. Now, however these may differ from one another, they all agree in taking erroneous views of men's natural condition; and therefore the work of Christ is either wholly set aside, or is mutilated and perverted to suit their corrupt fancies. The light of the Spirit of grace pierces through these abodes of darkness, and lays open to the soul the truth of what the Scripture says of men, that they are apostate, fallen, and ruined,

that they are in themselves, and as to their power, utterly undone and helpless, and yet that unless Divine justice be satisfied by the endurance of the wrath due to sin, and the performance of the obedience required by the law, no flesh shall be saved.

To a man thus enlightened, the work of Christ appears with peculiar beauty and preciousness, as being exactly the thing which he feels he needs. He has dishonoured the name of the Most High by his iniquity:—he sees that Christ has glorified it by His work. He has contemned the law by his transgressions:—he sees that Christ has magnified it by His obedience. He has entailed the curse by his sin:—he sees that Christ has procured the blessing by His righteousness. He has provoked the wrath of God by his apostasy:—he sees that in Christ He is reconciled, and reconciling the world unto Himself: "To them that believe Christ is precious."

Application.

We are called to mark the glorious nature of the work of Christ, and the security of those who trust in it. To those who know anything of God and of their own state, it appears as if they would be safe and happy, were they only able to undo what they have done, and to stand before the Judge in spotless innocence. But, brethren, what though the whole universe of creatures were to unite in serving God, what would all that be compared with the service which He has received at the hand of Christ. Let Christ be placed on the one side, and all creatures on the other: they are not so much to Him, as a twinkling star is to the sun shining in his strength. Now, it is by the glory of the person we are to determine the value of the obedience. And therefore we say, that the work of Christ exceeds in value the work of angels and men, as far as the Creator transcends the creatures.

"The Spirit of Grace"

(Preached 5th January, 1840).

SECOND SERMON.

ZECHARIAH xii. 10.—*"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."*

THE great work committed to the Spirit of grace in the economy of man's redemption is, to glorify Christ, and that by receiving of His, and showing it unto the soul. We have accordingly found, that the life which He communicates to sinners in the day of their new birth is the life of Christ: "Because I live, ye shall live also:"—that the influence by which, from that moment, they are sustained and directed, is the influence which descends to them from Christ:—"He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit:"—and that the convictions which they receive of their sinful and miserable condition, are convictions drawn from the doctrine of Christ:—"of sin, because they believe not on me." In my last discourse, and that which immediately preceded it, I endeavoured to show that, in leading the subjects of His operations on to the way of salvation, the Spirit of grace enlightens their minds in the knowledge of the *glory* of Christ; for having discovered that they are unutterably vile in themselves, and do nothing but what is full of dishonour to God, they can find no rest till they see as their salvation One who is infinitely glorious, and who, in all He does, magnifies the name of the Most High. He enlightens their minds in the knowledge of the *grace* of Christ.

To speak to them of the glory of Christ apart from His grace, is only to supply fresh fuel to their distress: for that is the glory which they have despised, and therefore how can they bear the wrath of Him who shines in it? But, in His grace, He appears most ready to receive them that have rejected Him, to justify them that have condemned Him, and to bless them that have cursed Him. He enlightens their minds in the knowledge of the *work* of Christ. And this is indispensable to their relief, because they see the most formidable barriers in the way of any favour being shown to them, and barriers of such a nature, that the very way in which they are removed constitutes a prime element in their deliverance and joy. A race of blind and hypocritical men imagine, that if favour is shown to them by Christ, they will be content, no matter how it is done: but they who are taught of the Spirit of grace are constrained to look into the channel through which the favour comes, and unless they see, and are assured, that the name, and truth, and law of God are magnified, it can afford no satisfaction to them. But this they see is done in the work of Christ, and to them the words are full of the richest meaning and the sweetest delight; "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake:" "He hath magnified the law, and made it honourable."

I now observe, in the *fourth* place, that the Spirit of grace enlightens the mind in the knowledge of the *salvation* of Christ. In the glory of Christ, we see that infinite fountain whence all deliverance to the children of men must come. In the grace of Christ, we see the golden key which is to open it, and let forth its waters for the healing of the nations. In the work of Christ, we see the wondrous channel in which these waters are to pass to the objects of Divine compassion and love. But in the salvation of Christ, we are called to contemplate the streams themselves, and the happy effects they produce on those whom they visit.

And 1st, The Spirit of grace shows the man whom he teaches, that in Christ there is salvation from *spiritual darkness.* I beg that you will bear in mind, what I have more than once remarked, that the man who is under the teaching of the Spirit of grace, is made a partaker

of spiritual life; in other words, is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, and therefore, is susceptible of the impressions, and capable of the discoveries that are communicated unto him. Now, one way in which the life he has received shows itself, is, by a sensibility to a blindness and darkness of which he never before complained. To hear some people talk, one would suppose that, if ever they were troubled with this evil, they have got entirely free of it, and that now all they want is the simple gospel set before them, and they will receive it. My friends, it may be thought a breach of charity, but I am disposed to call in question the reality of all that these people profess to have known and felt; and the best thing that could happen to them, would be a deep discovery of their total ignorance. I ask, why do the Scriptures abound with descriptions of men's natural state as one of darkness—"ye were sometime darkness,"—of ignorance,—"having the understanding darkened, through the ignorance that is in them,"—of blindness,—"being alienated from the life of God, because of the blindness of their heart?" And why do they so often speak of the people of God as being in darkness,—"He that hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light,"—as complaining of their extreme folly and ignorance,—"surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man,"—as owning their brutish stupidity—"I was as a beast before thee?" Why all this, if men are not in such a condition? But observe, there is salvation in Christ from this spiritual darkness. He is given "a light to lighten the Gentiles:" "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life:" "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:" He is made of God unto His people "wisdom."

In the 2nd place, the Spirit of grace shows a man that in Christ there is salvation from *condemnation.* The apostasy of man began in the blinding and deceiving of the heart: his recovery begins in the opening of his eyes, and putting truth into his inward parts. The apostasy hence led him into sin, and by sin into condemnation. In Christ there is the pardon of sin, and the consequent

freedom from condemnation: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." By the apostasy, men lost their righteousness: in Christ they are furnished with a righteousness, and therein are accepted in the sight of God: "accepted in the beloved." I beg you not only to ponder the truth I now declare, but to consider the place in which I have put it. The first thought that arises in many people's minds on the discovery of their sins is, We must seek, with the help of God, to do better for the time to come. Now, friends, this is one of the high-roads to hell; and if you are not driven from it, you will go as certainly, and as speedily to hell, as in your former practices. I deny not, but the really awakened may attempt to get peace in this way, but they will soon find that they are becoming worse and worse: for the Lord, in mercy, will burn them out of every such expedient, and shut them up to the true way of salvation. And that way begins with God, and reconciliation to Him through Christ; and till that be accomplished, it is idle to talk about religion; you are not a whit better than infidels. Let me appeal on this point, to those amongst you that are sighing under a load of conscious guilt, trembling because of the wrath of God, or furiously contending with Him about the sovereignty of His grace. What, brethren, I ask, what can you do, what can you profit, till the burden is taken from your back, and you have seen that the name of God is honoured, your sin pardoned, and the law magnified? Now this is the salvation you have in Christ: for "in Him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

In the 3rd place, the Spirit of grace shows a man that in Christ, there is salvation from *sin*. The way of carnal wisdom is the reverse of the wisdom of God. Many present will say, Oh, there must be salvation from sin first, and then salvation from the curse! But no; the Scriptures teach that there is salvation from wrath first, and then salvation from sin. If it were otherwise, then it would be the pure, the holy, the godly, that are justified, that is, declared righteous, and have eternal life. But what saith the Scripture? "But to him that

worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness." In looking to Christ, the question is not, Are you enlightened, broken-hearted, weaned from sin, separated from the world, delivered from Satan? The question is, Are you ungodly? In that character, and in that alone, must you come to Him, and look to Him for righteousness; and in Him you shall be declared perfectly righteous; not out of respect to a single holy feeling or action of yours, but solely out of respect to the perfect righteousness of Christ. But, mark it well, it is impossible for a man to cast one look of faith to Christ, and continue in sin: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts;" for there is virtue gone out of Him to every one that looks to Him, which gives a death-blow to every lust, and every sin:—and yet no one sin is completely killed, till the soul is in being separated from the body. "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" And as there is death from Christ to every sin, so is there life to every grace;—and yet no one grace is perfect in the present world—"for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

In the 4th place, the Spirit of grace shows a man that there is in Christ salvation from *every enemy*. The departure of men from God involved the loss of His friendship, and exposure to a vast number of enemies. There is Satan, with his deep policy, and dreadful power, and vast resources—an enemy so mighty that all the princes and potentates of the earth, though combining into one grand confederacy, could not defeat him in a single scheme; and yet so cowardly, that the youngest believer in this assembly, will be enabled to put him to flight in his boldest attacks. There is the world: an enemy which is in great esteem with most professing churches in the present day, and their only complaint is, that they cannot get enough of it; but an enemy that is dreaded and shunned by all who are in earnest about the glory of the Divine name, and the salvation of their immortal souls. There is the flesh,—the deepest, and

the most active, and most unwearied, and most dangerous enemy of all,—which never disturbs a man till the Spirit of grace awakens him; but which from that moment never lets him rest: it is with him in secret, polluting his prayers, distracting his meditations, wasting his time: it is with him in the family, setting him upon quarrels, leading him to vain and foolish talking, disturbing him in the worship of God, and occasioning innumerable evils: it is with him in the house of God, distracting his attention, disturbing his mind, keeping away the Word, putting him upon judging the preacher, when he should be condemning himself; dealing with the sermon, when he should be dealing with Christ; thinking of his neighbour's concerns, when he should be thinking of his own interests; dreaming about his worldly affairs, when he should be engaged with his eternal concerns. There is poverty, affliction, sickness, and death. But in Christ, there is salvation from all these enemies. As to Satan, "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross." As to the world, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." As to sin, "If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed." As to poverty, and afflictions, and diseases, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." As to death, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He is made unto His people "redemption."

1. In regard to this salvation, I observe, that the Spirit of grace shows to the soul that it is exceeding *great*. He shows him that it is great in its *plan*. It was in the mount of the eternal counsels that the plan was first seen, which has been revealed at sundry times and in divers manners to the Church. And oh, how great must that salvation be, in the design of which were lavished the treasures of infinite wisdom! "He worketh all things after the counsel of his will." It is great in

its *purchase.* We are accustomed to value things according to the price which is paid for them. Now, it was no mean price that was demanded, and actually given, for this wonderful treasure: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." It is great in its *application.* By many it is thought, that if salvation be purchased and proclaimed, nothing more is necessary to insure its reception, than that people be plainly told that they are welcome to receive it. Now, dear brethren, I have spoken to you of the great salvation, and have briefly, and therefore very imperfectly, set it before you; and now, I declare to you, as the testimony of Him who is Faithful and True, that there is not one of you *seeking* this salvation but is perfectly welcome to it. I have repeated this for more than five years, I may say every time I have had the honour to enter this pulpit, and yet I see some people before me, who are still unbelievers. Am I then to say, that I labour amongst a people that are, of all others, the most blind and incorrigible? Are the people of other congregations, and especially of other denominations, more intelligent and pliable? I rather suspect, if *Christ's* Gospel were to be carried to them, and *Christ's* salvation to be preached to them, they would treat it just in the way in which it is treated by many here. But, oh, the greatness of this salvation, that none inferior in glory, none less in power than the Spirit of the Father and the Son, can apply it to any soul! "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The salvation I speak of, is great in its *nature.* It hath respect not to the temporal, but to the eternal condition of men: it provides not for the ills of the body, but for the ills of the soul: it seeks not the passing objects of a day, but an object that shall last for ever. It is great in its *effects* How dreadful the evils from which it delivers! Men, indeed, make light of them, and sport with them; but they are fools, that scatter firebrands, arrows, and death: they have only to see their nature, and feel their reality, to be made

serious, and then everything sinks into insignificance compared with them. Oh! what is it to a man that trembles before the wrath of God, that is burdened with conscious guilt, that is oppressed with a hard heart, whether he be rich or poor in this world, honoured or despised, in health or sickness? How precious are the blessings which it bestows! These are little esteemed by the world, because they do not understand their nature, they do not feel their need of them, they do not consider the happiness of having them. But, to those that are really awakened, they are above all price. To get life to the dead soul, light to the benighted understanding, pardon to the condemned criminal, righteousness to the bankrupt sinner, adoption to the alienated rebel, purity to the unclean, strength to the weak, access to the banished, eternal life to the child of wrath—these are precious blessings, which cause the soul to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It is great in its *end,* even "glory to God in the highest."

2. I observe still farther in regard to this salvation, that it is a *complete* salvation. There is not a point in the fallen condition of men, which it does not provide for, not a wound for which it has not a balm, not an evil which it is not able to remove, not a want which it is not sufficient to supply. We are very ready to think, that the salvation of Christ provides for every case but ours; and if we ever discover, that it contemplates such a case, then we run to the idea that ours is too far gone to be remedied. But, my friends, instead of yielding to your own thoughts, and trusting to your own foolish hearts, attend to the Word of God, and consider whether it offers any ground for such opinions, as those you entertain and express, in regard to your state. If you decline this, then we prefer against you the charge of preferring your own folly to the wisdom of God. But if you come to the Word of God, there you will find it expressly asserted that the salvation of Christ is complete: "All things are ready:" "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" "It is finished:" "This is a faithful saying, and worthy

of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Now, it will not do to say, that it is complete for others, but not for you. Christ has made no such exception, and if you make the exception, then you are guilty of unbelief; and from this charge there is no possibility that you can escape, but by having recourse to Him, who never sent any away because of His inability or unwillingness to help them: "And ye are complete in him."

3. I observe still farther, that the Spirit of grace shows that the salvation of Christ is *everlasting.* The capital error into which multitudes fall is, that they seek for present relief and comfort, and think not of their condition in eternity. And because they have found peace now, they hold by it, and dream on in it, till they and their peace perish together. A truly awakened sinner will have no salvation, but such as provides for both worlds; and if any peace is offered to him, his first question is, How will it stand the judgment-day? Oh, the madness of many amongst us! Give them church privileges: let them come to the Lord's Table: and they care not whether the Judge will at last approve, or condemn the deed. To such a fearful height does some people's folly carry them, that though the minister tells them, and their own consciences witness to the truth of the statement, that they are not the children of God, they will come before God with a lie in their mouths, and for the sake of keeping up what many regard as a mere custom, they will openly blaspheme God, and bring ruin upon their own souls. But the man who is under the teaching of the Spirit of grace proceeds upon altogether different principles. For he feels that it is with God, and for eternity, he has to do; and not with man, and for this transitory state. He therefore desires to build deep, and to build strong, that the foundation may last. And this he finds in Christ! for the salvation which He bestows shall never end. It is like the pillar of cloud, and the pillar of fire, which followed the Israelites continually through the wilderness, till they reached the land of Canaan: so the Lord Christ, with

His great and complete salvation, will never leave His people, but guide them through all the turnings of their present pilgrimage, and plant them safely on the hills of Zion. The situations into which they are brought are sometimes very trying: the dearest friends may forsake them: the most valued privileges may be taken from them: the most grievous calamities may befal them: the most formidable dangers may gather around them. But the Saviour in the midst of them is mighty: He will save them: He will rejoice over them to do them good; and in their experience shall the words be fulfilled, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The covenant is everlasting: "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." The love of Christ is everlasting: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." His truth is everlasting: "But my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." His intercession is everlasting: "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." The seed of grace is everlasting: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." The indwelling of the Spirit is everlasting: "He shall abide with you for ever."

"To know more of Christ"

(Preached 20th February, 1853).

PHILIPPIANS iii. 12-14.—*"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before—I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

THE enemies of Christ are often made the unwitting instruments of advancing that cause which they seek to hinder, and of establishing that truth which they labour to subvert. The attempts of false teachers to seduce the believing brethren at Philippi gave the Apostle, writing under the Spirit of truth, an occasion for setting forth what at that time, and in all subsequent ages, was calculated not only to defeat their designs, but also eminently to further the cause of Christ. We find him setting forth, in very clear and glowing terms, what he knew in his own case *nature* is: what advantage it possesses, and what therefore it is able to do, and this is succeeded by an exceedingly animated description of the spirit of that religion that stands *opposed* to what is *natural*, and this is also illustrated in his own case. The delineation of character which he thus gives, is so bright, and the colouring is so lovely and attractive, that, in the judgment of the Apostle, there was a

possibility that some might think of him more highly than they ought to think: and accordingly, with his characteristic modesty, he is led to throw in some modification of what he had advanced.

Verse 12.—"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

The basis upon which, what the Apostle here sets forth, is made to rest, is the account given, in the immediately preceding verses, of his spirit and character and deportment as a believer in Christ. It will not be easy for us at a glance, to catch even the prominent features of the character, which the Apostle gives of himself. We have on two successive occasions, attempted to consider it in detail; and the result of our attempts, it is to be hoped, has been to make us feel that we know nothing as yet, as we ought to know it. If it be so difficult to enter into, and apprehend the description the Apostle gives of himself, when you are noticing it purposely, and in detail: it will be much more difficult to seize even upon the details of that description, and yet if we have not some apprehension of it, we shall be in no condition to apprehend what he here says. He looks back upon the state in which he was naturally, surveys all the accomplishments, with which he was adorned, takes into account all the advantages which the Jewish religion offered to him; and certainly of all the conditions which were then presented to natural men, none will compare with that at which Paul looked. And he freely avows that these things were entitled to be regarded, in certain points of view, as gain. He confesses, that at one period of his life, in his own estimation, they were of this nature: but *grace* had wrought a marvellous *change*, so marvellous that the things he was wont to count as gain, he now reckoned loss, and he did so "for Christ." He had been put to the proof whether this estimation he made was sincere, and to what extent it influenced his mind and his conduct. He stood the test nobly, and actually suffered the loss of all things still for Christ, "that he might win Him."

Nor did he make this sacrifice blindly or rashly, nor was he like many who take up a position in religion and hold out a profession, but when they are questioned cannot give any satisfactory account of themselves. The Apostle follows up the account of the sacrifices he made, by telling us why it was he made these sacrifices. Verses 8 l.c. and 9: "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." *That* you may take as an example of himself in general; but not satisfied with this general description of the line of conduct he pursued, and the sacrifices he had made, he plunges into the depths involved in this general account, and referring to his desire to know Christ as his starting point, he goes on: the truth in his soul, like chariot wheels becoming more rapid as he proceeds. Verses 10 and 11: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Now, such *is* the man, such is the *position* of the man, and such is the *character* and *professions* of the man that says, "not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." What then does he do?

"But I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

We are not to understand him, as, in the least degree, calling back anything that he had previously advanced regarding himself, and his attainments. We are not to understand him as actuated by that false humility, which leads a person to deny what grace has wrought for him, when its evidence is distinctly before him, supported by that which alone upholds the soul that receives it,—the testimony of God made available by the power of His Spirit shining in the soul. We are to understand the Apostle simply as intimating that whatever he was, whatever he had preached, and whatever he had now, he was not to be understood as looking back upon it, for the purpose of making a Saviour of it, of resting

his confidence in it, and of pleading it before God, as the foundation on which he was to be accepted of Him, and blessed by Him. And it is to be understood too as intimating that whatever it was, the Apostle looked rather to what he was not, than to what he was; rather to what he knew not, than to what he knew; rather to what he experienced not, than to what he experienced; rather to what he had not attained than to what he had attained, "I follow after," and then follows a remarkable "if"—a particle which the Apostle has more than once made use of in this passage. He counted all things but loss, if only he could win Christ. He now follows after: "If that I may apprehend." He here intimates who it was, that began the work of grace. It was not the Apostle, but Him from whom all good comes; and it began with Him from whom all good comes, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Mediator between God and man. Who having done the work of Mediator for sinners, is now in circumstances to do the work of Mediator in sinners,—the latter work proceeding upon the former, the latter work being the fruit of that which preceded it. Now, as Mediator, Jesus Christ hath influence with the Father, in His intercession. "Him the Father heareth always." Jesus Christ hath the promise of the Holy Ghost for His people. This promise He pleads: and Jesus Christ sends the Holy Ghost in the name of Jesus Christ, and for the accomplishment in the soul of the great ends of His death. The Holy Ghost makes choice of the word of the truth of the gospel in carrying forward the work on which He is sent, and on which He comes: and it is in, and by Him, that Jesus Christ is to be considered as having apprehended the Apostle. He laid hold of him far from God and far from righteousness, having no knowledge whatever of his condition, no right uptaking of its nature: and certainly the farthest possible from being ashamed of what he was, and what he had done. He had not come to himself until he was apprehended by Christ Jesus. It is not *until* this apprehension takes place, through the power of the Holy Ghost, that a sinner can be said properly to come to himself. He then discovers somewhat of his sinful estate, and he sees

the misery to which he is exposed: his eye affects his heart, and affects his heart with shame, with grief, with self-loathing, and repentance is wrought in the soul. In the spirit of repentance he says, "I will arise and go unto my Father." The same mediation through which the Holy Ghost comes to apprehend the sinner, opens the way, by which the apprehended sinner finds his way back to the fountain of life. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. The sinner coming back in the way of repentance, and having faith granted in this way, must have communion with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ in this way. A penitent sinner can never rest, till he is in the bosom of the blessed God, folded in the arms of Jesus Christ. He there hears the Father say, "this, my son was lost, but is found." My beloved people, know ye what this is? This is *heaven upon earth.* Closely connected with this, and inseparable from it, is the soul's communion with His Son Jesus Christ. How can the Father open His arms to receive such a culprit? How can He embrace him, in His love: His warm, satisfying, refreshing love? The reason is, His eye is upon the Lamb that hath been slain. How can the poor sinner venture so near the Divine majesty? How can such a vile reptile, who feels that his proper place is the lowest hell, and that he has done all he could to provoke God to destroy him: how can he venture to look the Father in the face? By faith, he sees the Lamb of God; there the eye of the Father and the eye of the soul meet in one and the same place. The Father rests in the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. The penitent soul coming back to the Father, rests in the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. *There* is reconciliation. "Bring forth the fairest robe" (Luke xv. 22 to 24). Oh, ye angels in the presence of God, well may you long for a sinner to be brought to repentance. It is a new feast to you. They have there some fresh discoveries made of the glory of the blessed God. "There is joy amongst the angels in heaven over one sinner brought to repentance." Oh, that this feast were theirs this day, ere the sun went down from the earth, and that there were joy in heaven over one sinner brought to

repentance! For what is a poor sinner thus apprehended by Jesus Christ? He is apprehended by Him that, as we have seen, and in the way we have shortly explained, he may be brought back unto God: may be reconciled to Him, and enter into the enjoyment of His favour: may be sanctified for Him, by being renewed after His image, and made to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness: that he may be a witness for Him in the world as long as he is kept there—that He is God, the God of salvation: that he may have a title to the eternal enjoyment of God in the heavenly world; and that, in due time, he may be taken to the full and everlasting enjoyment, of that inheritance; "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Now, the Apostle had before his mind, the purpose for which the Lord Jesus had met him in the way: the way of rebellion, the way of persecuting His followers, the way of death,—and had by the work of His spirit on his soul, in and through the word of the truth of the gospel, laid hold of him, apprehended him: and Jesus Christ, when He once got hold of him, would not let him go. No man will be able to pluck His people out of His hand. The poor creature sometimes in his lusts, his wandering eye roaming on forbidden objects, through carnality and unbelief prevailing in his soul, is struggling to get out of Christ's hands: and the poor creature when the old nature prevails, and seems to get the upper hand, struggles as if it were in a sort of bondage to get out: and the soul is sometimes wounded with a great horror lest it should be so. We see this in Bunyan. The enemy pressed him sore to let Christ go away: he struggled long; but the temptation at last seemed to prevail, and he allowed the thought to pass his will, "Let Him go if He will." Forthwith the tempter turned the accuser of the brethren—Now you are done for. Then came the sea of trouble. Bunyan was like to sink altogether into despair, when the good "Spirit of all grace," who had apprehended Bunyan, let him see this. You may say, "let Him go if He will;" but Christ will *not* go. Bunyan got into this, and was made more than a conqueror. He conquered when he was conquered: he rose when he fell: he was taken in, when he was shut out. This

is a hard lesson to learn. It is not easy for faith to get at it. It requires a good deal of brokenness of spirit, to meddle with it. One requires to be clothed with humility, if he would look at this faithfulness of Jesus Christ to his own work. John x, 28-29: "I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." It was *thus* that the Apostle was brought, through grace, to be of one mind with the Lord Jesus; and it is when the soul is brought to be of one mind with the Lord Jesus, that evidence shines out, that there is salvation. People speak in our day about gospel, about faith, about Christian experience. What is it? What is the gospel? What is faith? What is Christian experience? It is when, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the soul is led to follow after, if that it might apprehend that for which it was apprehended of Jesus Christ. There you see the gospel in a living form: there you see faith in its precious fruits: there you see Christian experience in its holy character. There were two things therefore that influenced the Apostle in this pursuit. An humble estimate of anything he had yet done, felt, or enjoyed, and a discovery of what stretched out before him, which he desired to reach. Observe what we noticed once before—He is content to do all this "if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Nothing will satisfy the present generation, but full assurance. They cannot be content with anything short of the highest degree of confidence: the shew of their countenance testifies against them. Some men's sins follow after them, but the sins of the present generation are going before them: they are open to all men; and if ever the history of the present time be written by a man raised up, and qualified by grace for the task, it will be written as one of the most mournful pages in the history of the church, so delusive are the notions that generally prevail, as if it were a time of great prosperity.

Verse 13: "Brethren, I count not myself to have

apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." The Apostle is very instant in impressing the Philippians, and all to whom his epistle might come, with the fact, that he did not count himself to have apprehended; and this certainly was not merely with the view of justifying himself in his own eyes, or in that of the church, for he was evidently guided by the spirit of truth, thus to write, that he might be an example to all who should come after him. For, if such a man as Paul, writing this, guided by the spirit of inspiration, with all his eminent attainments, was yet constrained to speak in these lowly and modest terms, ill does it become ordinary men, to speak in any other way. We may regard it as a very high attainment indeed. Some will hardly come the length of using that language, and no one can warrantably use it, who does not come by it in the way in which the Apostle did. In our day, men will have members of churches to take their position by a leap. They fly high enough now. They will creep low enough, by and by,—while those now weeping will fly like eagles, up to heaven. There are to be met with, those whose professions are so high, who claim to have such eminent attainments, and such assurance of safety that ordinary Christians cannot keep in sight of them: yet they assail those who do not sail with them, they bark and bite at them. These people cannot bear a religion that strikes its roots deep into the soul: that is more careful about the *foundation* than the superstructure. No! men are in haste to be rich in the world. They are in haste to be rich in what is called a Christian profession: they have not time to wait for the growth of a root. It is all top work. A fit mark for the thunder of Jehovah's wrath: His lightning will blast it, and lay it low. Why should people be so careful about using such language? Because it has in it the claim to be indeed apprehended of Jesus Christ: and this, after all, is the main point, and it is so regarded by all who are taught of God. It is that at which they are kept from first to last. Are they indeed apprehended of Jesus Christ? For a man to regard this as a settled point; to lay it upon the shelf,

and not to take it down and examine it, is exceedingly perilous, to say the least of it. It is far better to have it before you, and to be obtaining increase of evidence to it. You that have any reason to lay in the claim to be apprehended of Jesus Christ, keep this question ever before you. Seek to have fresh light thrown upon it, and to have it more and more firmly established.

"But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Not literally, for we have found him reviewing them. Not absolutely, but in relation to certain uses that might be made of things behind. He forgot them, or left them out of account, or bid them away, turning his mind from them. He bade the things which were behind away, in the sense of not looking at them, so as to have complacency in them, and boast himself of them, so as to make them a pillow on which he might lay down his head and take his ease: like a traveller at some lovely refreshing spot, who is induced to suspend his journey, and there fall asleep. He did not look at them, so as to be admired for them, or to admire himself in them. People's knowledge, gifts, and attainments are often made a looking glass, at which they may stand and gaze on themselves as reflected in it, until they swell with vanity, and in something of the spirit of the proud king of Babylon, say secretly in their hearts, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty." Paul, as it respects these various views, forgot the things behind; he treated them as if they did not belong to him, as if they had no existence, and reached forth to those which were before. He did not think so much of the knowledge which through grace he had obtained of the mysteries of the gospel, as of his ignorance of the knowledge which still required to be sought after. He did not dwell too much, upon the faith that had been in lively and active exercise upon the mystery of the gospel, whereby the truth was sucked into the soul,—as he thought of the scope that still lay before him for the exercise of faith, and the need there was for new enlarged increased actings of it in liveliness and vigour. He did not think so much of the love by

which his heart had been warmed, wherein he rested on all the objects in which his faith rested, because of the spiritual beauty with which they shone, as well as because of the interests he had in them: as he thought of the love of Christ, and its constraining influence, which yet remained to be put forth, and the vast fields he saw stretching out before him, wherein this love might have free scope to exercise itself for the glory of God and be satisfied. He did not think so much of the humility with which he had hitherto been adorned; he forgot that: he thought more of the humility that still lay before him. He thought not of the zeal he had manifested in the cause of Christ, but sought to come near to the fountain that he might have his zeal fed afresh. He forgot his past labours, and looked upon the work which was yet to be performed. He forgot the things which were behind, and reached forth towards those which were before.

Verse 14: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." He had a mark before him, to which all his plans, labours and sacrifices pointed, and in which they were to terminate and converge. What that was, was the end of his course. He had his eye upon the goal where his race was to terminate, where the prize was to be awarded to the successful runner. What that goal is, I need hardly state to you: looking at it in various points of view, it has various aspects. As to Paul's state, the mark, the goal to which he looked, towards which he advanced, and at which he laboured to arrive—was a full and *unchangeable confirmation* in the state of grace: so that he might never be moved away from that, into which he had been called in Christ Jesus. Looking at it in relation to his character, then the mark was, that point where his character reached full perfection: where his knowledge would not be dimmed by ignorance: where the light would shine clearly without a cloud: where faith would no longer have to battle with unbelief: where all fears would be removed, and faith perfected. Where it would burst forth into meridian splendour, and give place to the eternal enjoyment of its objects. Where love would be pure and perfect, where his charity

would have no uncharitable elements mixing itself with it. Where all the graces of the Spirit would blossom forth in their beauty, power and perfection. Looking at it as to his state, it is his not being occupied with mere pledges or foretastes, the grapes of Eschol, but passing the Jordan: it is his entering upon the good land at large; seeing the King in His palace, being welcomed by Him.—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And according to this invitation entering into the joy of his Lord. It is his seeing Him, as He is; and knowing Him, as He is known. His being a pillar in the temple of God, to go no more out: his being led unto living fountains of waters: his having God to wipe away all tears from his eyes. His having his character vindicated from all aspersions, his being raised from troubles and sorrows, brought to the possession of joy, the joy of joys, everlasting joy. The joy of the Father's love, the joy of the Son's grace, the joy of the Spirit's love, the joy of the Triune Jehovah, the joy of all His perfections, in as far as he was capable of receiving them. Psalm xvi. 11: "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy: at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

This is called the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Some thinking the mark is the same as the prize, have proposed to render the former clause, I press along the mark, applying the expression to a racecourse. But if I may venture to speak from the little knowledge I pretend to, of the language in which the Scripture was originally written, I am inclined to prefer our own version,—understanding by the mark, the point at which the race terminates, and by the prize, the reward that follows. It is called the prize of the high calling of God. It is not of works but of grace. It is not a prize gained by themselves. It is not gained by Paul's labours, or sorrows, or sufferings, or wrestlings. No. It is the prize of God's high calling. God has called, and but for that call there would be no prize. God has called in order to introduce to the prize: else there would be no call to meetness for, and title to the prize, and God conducts on to the attainment of the prize, so that from the beginning to the end, it is the

prize of God's high calling. Psalm lxv. 1: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake." It is the high calling of God in Christ: He calls in Christ. He purposed to call in Christ,—they are chosen in Him. He provided for their effectual calling in Christ Jesus. He laid down His life, so that the call might be theirs. He calls in Christ Jesus by His Spirit at the instance of His intercession. Thus they get a title to and meetness for, and at last reach the prize. So when they get at the mark, there they find the Triune Jehovah ready to receive them; and they get the prize as that of God's high calling in Christ.

In Conclusion.

1. See how consistent it is, in a Christian, to own and declare what through grace he is. It was so with the apostle.

2. Learn that deep humility is a prominent feature of those who have been favoured with high attainments, in the life of God. If ever there were high attainments, they were those of the great Apostle of the Gentiles; yet see his deep humility, his genuine modesty. It will always be so with His people, throughout their whole course. Take Paul ten years after this, if he lived so long, he would with tenfold more force, declare what he here says. We have another aged disciple in the north of Scotland, and she too is exhibiting this feature of character, the nearer she comes to the fulness of blessedness, into which I trust she is being prepared to enter, the humbler and poorer she becomes, so that perhaps at last she will be brought to the point of spiritual zero, then she will rise to heaven and her sun go no more down.

"Living on Christ"

(Preached 9th April, 1854).

JOHN vi. 57, l.c.—"*So he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.*"

WE were formed for the enjoyment of an infinite good, and nothing else will yield entire and everlasting satisfaction to our souls. The soul is of a noble nature, having enlarged capacities, and great desires, and although centuries have been spent in the attempt to find out, apart from the blessed God, that which will allay its craving, and supply the happiness which it needs, all that has resulted has been vanity and vexation, of spirit; nor will it be otherwise, so long as man is man, and God is God.

We have the truth in this matter brought before us in holy scripture, which instructs us in our true condition, the many and varied wants with which we are beset, and opens to us the only thing that can supply them in time, and throughout eternity. This is brought before us in the few but comprehensive words of our text: "He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."

There are here three things deserving our attention:—

1. The Meat.
2. The eating of it.
3. The effect which the eating produces.

1. Let us consider the meat. This is the Lord Jesus Himself, as is plain from expressions which repeatedly occur in the context. Now, in order rightly to uptake Jesus Christ as the meat that is here spoken of, it would be needful to contemplate,

Firstly, His personal *dignity* and *excellence;* for if we overlook this or err regarding it we cannot possibly be right in anything else. If this personal glory be hid from our souls, we must of necessity remain totally ignorant of Him, as the meat that is referred to. The Scripture makes it quite plain, that this is the foundation of all true Christian religion, and you are even now called to enquire whether this be the foundation of your religion, especially such of you as profess His name. It will be a sad account of you, if you have to begin such an enquiry this day. Whatever be the stage you have reached in your Christian profession, whether you are little children, young men, or fathers; if your profession be true and sincere, you will be familiar with this enquiry, exactly in proportion to your standing; those that are furthest advanced will be best acquainted with it, because it will have come most frequently and strongly before their minds; and those who are in the midway of their profession, though less acquainted with such an enquiry than their seniors, will be in advance of those that are beneath them; but the youngest child in grace cannot be altogether a stranger to the enquiry, whether a view of Christ's personal glory lies at the foundation of the religion he claims to have. Is there not reason to fear that few can stand before this simple test; that most of you in this matter are without any foundation at all; whilst the foundation of not a few is like that of the house which was built on the sand, and which consequently came to ruin. "Who do men say that I am?" "Who do ye say that I am?" He whose eyes are as a flame of fire now addresses you. How many will be prepared, though with a trembling heart, to say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" And of those who return this answer, how many would get their answers stamped with the seal? Mat. xvi. 17: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." That will be part of the investigation of the great day, and because it will be so, prepare to meet Him.

Secondly, It would be necessary to advert to His *undertaking.* It is in this way that the glory of His

person is manifested, and but for it that glory must have remained hid from all creatures in heaven and earth. It would have been known to the Father, and known to the Son of His love, and known to the Holy Ghost living in deeply mysterious fellowship, and mutual complacency and delight in the one uncreated, infinite, eternal Godhead; but farther it could not have gone except for His undertaking. It was put to Him by the Father of whom are all things, to undertake the salvation of sinners, and it was put to Him by the Father in the Father's love to sinners; and the Son in His love agreed to the undertaking and engaged Himself to accomplish it. If therefore you have such a knowledge of the person of Christ as we have glanced at under the former particular, you will have found it introductory to a view of what He has undertaken even to effect, and it will be in this undertaking you will have seen what you have seen of that glory shining forth. There is the glory of His infinite dignity as God, of His unspeakable love, of His deep condescension, of His tender-hearted compassion, of His unsearchable riches. There is the glory of His manhood in its hypostatical union with the Godhead; the unction without measure in that nature of the Holy Ghost; the varied and nameless graces wherewith in that nature He thus appears adorned; and the perfect fitness that He possesses for going through with the work that He has undertaken. It is thus that the soul finds its confidence won to Him, and that it can venture itself upon Him, and expect, in the language of the Apostle, with some measure of assurance, that that which it hath committed to Him, He will keep against the great day. Now, it is not every day that you will meet with people occupied with these things; that give evidence of being in the palaces of ivory which the King frequents, and wherein He makes poor creatures glad. Have your souls ever been brought to breathe out this prayer, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory"? And have you gone on till you got an answer, "I will make all my goodness to pass before you"?

Thirdly, It would be proper to glance at the *execution* of His undertaking. This involves a number of things which we can do little more than notice, neither having

time nor strength to enter into them and illustrate them. But you will find the use, not to say the absolute need of marking these stepping stones. There is then in the accomplishment of His undertaking to save sinners:

1st. The substitution of Himself in their room. It was in this place that He was to labour, and suffer, and work out the deliverance which He engaged to effect. Your ears are familiar with the theological language of substitution, it is to be feared that the minds of most are altogether in the dark; and hence it is that so many people in this land are carried about with divers and strange doctrines, their hearts not being stablished with grace. And what else can become of you if you be merely hearers of the word and not doers; if you get no further than the sound of Scriptural instruction: and do not in spiritual living exercises of your souls, get into the truth, realise and make use of it.

He who knew no sin was made sin for them who knew no righteousness, that they who knew sin might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And if divine justice looks upon Him as a substitute in the room of guilty persons, what does it become these guilty persons to do? Ought they not to seek a sight of Him in this remarkable condition?

2nd. There is His *obedience*. The law remained in force upon those for whom He substituted Himself. It did not abate one jot nor tittle of its demands because of the changes the apostacy brought upon our nature. When man stood under the law in all the innocence and beauty of His Creator's image, then the law with the authority which becomes it, said, "Pay me that thou owest." And when the temple of man's nature was rifled and robbed of the image of God, and laid in ruins, the law maintained the same authority and gave forth the same voice, "Pay me that thou owest." They gave no heed to it, or made promises only to be broken, and to increase their debt; or fell asleep in the lap of self-righteous sufficiency, imagining that they had found a garment long and wide enough to wrap themselves in, not believing that they would be discovered by the justice of God to be clothed in filthy rags. Not one of all Adam's posterity has ever been found by nature to change his tone regarding the law

and its demands, or to treat it otherwise than with contempt and scorn; till the God man appeared and in the nature lowly and meek which He had assumed, placed Himself under the law, listened to its voice, had respect to His own engagement and set Himself to the honourable and arduous task of fulfilling every demand that it made. Mat. iii. 15, m.c.: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." We live in a lawless age, and the most lawless thing is the religion of nature which denies the power of godliness. Men cannot say now with any show of reason and truth, Rom. iii. 31: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid, we establish the law!", for the faith that commonly prevails does make void the law and the gospel too. But if your profession be what it ought, you will not be a lawless people, you will do business in these deep waters, its clear authoritative voice will have been heard in the inmost parts of your consciences, and if there be a particle of renewing grace in these, that will show itself in having respect to the voice of this law, taking its part, and looking after its receiving all that is due to it; and thus the law comes to be a schoolmaster to bring you to Christ. "This is the name by which He shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." Have you learned this language? Children soon begin to learn the names of those near and dear to them. Can you suppose that there are any children of God that have not learned the name of their Elder Brother?

3rd. There is His *sufferings*. The change that passed upon our nature to which I have alluded was itself a terrible calamity. The ruin of our globe, the crust of it bursting asunder, and all its parts being disjointed and tumbling into chaos, would be nothing compared to the ruin of man's soul. Recollect that human nature was lost then, and all descending from Adam by ordinary generation were lost in Him. There is a carnage for you! There is a battlefield! There is a stroke of the great murderer, to murder a whole race at one blow! But he could not have done that had they not listened to his temptation, had they not received into their souls the poison of Satan's lie in the place of the truth of

God; having taken him in and bent our necks to his yoke, Jehovah God went out and took His yoke with Him. But this was only the beginning of sorrows. In the day they ate the forbidden fruit, dying they died, they began to die, they entered upon a path of dying. Our life in our natural state is just a species of death. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." And that path so far as man was concerned was boundless, there was no end; hence the first death, hence the second death, hence eternal death; "The wages of sin is death."

Men will not listen to this, it is an unwelcome sound in their ears; what will they say of the reality? That will be more unwelcome still. If it troubles them to hear of such unwelcome things, how will it trouble them to endure them! They keep away from places where they are likely with great frequency and earnestness to listen to them; will they be able to get away from the awful reality? They set themselves up in opposition to those who press these things upon them: will they be able effectually to oppose themselves to Him who will execute this sentence? And you that are not only professed but real members of the church of God, are not you prepared to allow that this was once your case, and would have been so always but for sovereign mercy? You differ from others I Cor. iv. 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

This was the disposition that was manifested towards the penalty of the law by all Adam's posterity, and by Adam himself in a natural state. But the God man showed respect to this penalty, He subscribed to its equity. No doubt to intimate to us the terrible nature of the load that was in being laid upon Him, and also to intimate to us the reality but frailty of the nature He had assumed into union with Himself, He seemed to shrink from the sorrows that were gathering around Him; His noble heart seemed as if it would fairly be bowed down and faint when these sorrows began to press upon Him. But never for an instant did His

respect for the penalty of the law quail; never did He fail for a twinkling in submission to that penalty according to His own engagements. He set His face like a flint. He hid not His face from shame and spitting—He had a baptism to be baptised with, and was straitened till He accomplished it. He not only longed to submit to these sufferings, but He longed to get into them,—not for the sufferings sake, for the reality of His human nature shone out in His saying: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." But He saw momentous consequences suspended upon these being endured—He saw the path of glory awaiting Him. He saw His seed glittering like dew in prospect, and He longed to open that womb from which they were to come forth. He observed the glory with which they were to be crowned, and above all, the honour that would accrue to the Triune Jehovah in the person of the Father, and therefore He set His face stedfastly to go to Jerusalem, unlike to Paul. Acts xx. 22-23: "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Christ set His face to go to Jerusalem, telling His disciples the things that should befall Him. Have you any fellowship with Him in His sufferings? Most lack this distinction of a Christian. Where are you now? Nothing goes to the heart when it is softened and sanctified by grace, inflicting such deep and tender affliction, as the thought that Christ suffered all this for such a creature. All His true people say, had it been possible for me to have screened Him from that stroke, I would. There is their spirit coming out—that was impossible. Still, there is their loyal heart. He screened them from the stroke because He loved them—they cannot suffer as He suffered—but that is what the law laid down. I. John ii. 16: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. "That they will never do, unless they have the Spirit of Christ.

4th. There is His *death,* which formed the crowning part of that branch of His undertaking, that He had

to go through in His state of humiliation; the Scripture invites special attention to this point, and warns us to distinguish it from the sufferings, and the sufferings from the obedience—whilst at the same time it teaches us the doctrine, which we are accustomed to lay before you, and which you are called to receive and live upon—that it was obedience unto death,—for bear in mind that He placed Himself under the law, as the substitute of guilty creatures; as the substitute of guilty creatures He was held in law, as guilty—though in fact innocent. They that are guilty under the law, deserve to die—and He being the substitute of the guilty, as their substitute He deserved to die. He took this position with a view to die, He knew that the only outgate from it was by the gate of death; He entered into His sorrows well aware that out of these sorrows He could not get otherwise than by the path of death. His death was a public one—the sin had been done, the crime had been committed in open day, the expiation was to be made and the punishment inflicted in open day. It was a painful death—the tendency of sin is to give pain to the heart of God. What an agony that would be, if it were possible for Him to feel pain! We are now able to understand why sin was so dreadfully treated. It just gets what it would give if it had the power, and not only so, but His death was the extinction of His life—that life which He had assumed for the purpose of carrying out His noble and benevolent design of saving sinners—that life corresponding in nature to the life which had been lost in sin; that life was extinguished, and this is the consummation of pain. Accumulate pain as you will, in form, in degree, and duration, no pain of any kind or any degree, will compare with death. But the soul that sinneth shall die, and why? We have made one supposition to make the truth impressive to your hearts, and make you tremble at sin; we will make another—had it been possible for God to feel pain, what agony would have been inflicted by the stroke of sin! Had it been possible for God to die, what a death would be inflicted on Jehovah's life, coming beneath the hand of this accursed thing! But the fountain of life remains with Him—sin does no more to Him than the smoke

of the chimneys does to the sun in the heavens. It may for a short season obscure his rays, but the sun will soon make his way through it, and scatter it. Now, from this world, clouds of moral pollution ascend before the eye of the Holy One, and it is a marvel of patience that He puts up with it for a day. Are there not here, those who wonder that He bears for a single hour with the filthiness that comes out of their hearts? But, by and by, this world's history will be wound up. Its inhabitants will be removed from off its surface, the forbearance of God will come to an end, and then all this cloud of filthiness and pollution will be locked up in hell for ever; and they will go no more out from their punishment, as His people will go no more out from their happiness.

5th. There is His *glorification.* The meat for the soul is nothing more than the glorified Saviour. It is royal fare that they are to feed upon, and they have need of a royal heart to take enjoyment of it. Oh what need there is of the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost! What need there is of His resting largely upon you and me! Luke xxiv. 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" I Cor. xv. 14: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." I. Peter i. 21: "Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." Had He not risen from the dead He would not have been in a condition to woo a spouse for Himself. John xx. 17: "Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not: for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." Then I will woo my bride for I will be exalted a Prince and Saviour to grant repentance unto Israel and remission of sins; and I will gain her too; and then will come the day of His espousals, a day of gladness to His heart, and then she shall be for ever with the Lord. Psalm xlv. 10 and 11: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord:

and worship thou Him."

So much for a rapid and necessarily imperfect sketch of Him who is the meat spoken of in our text. We have to enquire respecting this meat:

2. Where this *meat* is to be found.

Firstly, It is set forth primarily in the counsels of Jehovah. It was meet that within the Godhead the first sight should be got of this marvellous meat. "I am Alpha," I am first in My place, I am first in the sight of everything worth seeing: and here is the great sight, "God manifest in the flesh." He was set forth in Jehovah's counsels. Through the weakness and infirmity of our nature we are permitted to speak of His counsels as distinct from His nature, from Himself, although we must never conceive of them as possibly separable. Under this aspect we judge that it is quite according to the analogy of faith, agreeable to the Scripture truth, and not stepping beyond the commission of the Christian ministry, to exhibit this meat as seen in the counsels of God, and to say to you who are capable of having fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, "Behold the Man!"

Secondly, This *meat* is set forth in the proclamation of the gospel. Upon the mountain of the gospel ministry; upon the mountain of the precious truth that is always found where the gospel ministry is—will the Lord make a feast to all people. Isaiah xxv. 6: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Isaiah lv. 1-3: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." John vi. 51: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread,

he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." He was humbled, was made a curse, was buried, and was glorified for the life of the world.

Thirdly, This meat is set forth in the ordinances, specially in the ordinance of the Lord's supper. His people are favoured with the presence of Him who gathered His little band around Him, ate with them the last passover, and gave them to eat the first supper—the Lord makes Himself known in the breaking of bread—"Take, eat, this is My Body broken for you." It is tender, solemn, precious work, to be engaged in. Every communion brings us nearer to the table in the sanctuary above, or to everlasting exclusion from all communions in earth and heaven.

3. It is necessary to notice respecting this meat, for whom this meat is provided. The Scripture answer is, it is for sinners. Mat. ix. 12-13: "But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." They that are full, need no meat, but they that are empty.

We now pass on to consider,

II. The eating of this meat.

There are two particulars under this head requiring to be noticed, each in its order; first, the Eater, and second, the eating of the meat by him.

1. The Eater. Who is it that eats this meat? I answer,

Firstly, It is the *spiritually needy*. Now in one sense, all may be said to need this meat, there is not an individual within these walls that can live without it; and every man that does not eat of it shall die. Oh! listen to the gospel in these Scriptures. Prov. viii. 4 and 5: "Unto you, O men, I call: and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." Prov. ix. 1 to 6: "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine: she hath also furnished her

table. She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live; and go in the way of understanding..' Now, ye simple, foolish people, without understanding, is not that a word for you? You cannot go away and say you have heard no gospel; some will say, there is little gospel there; well, who hath despised the day of small things? I don't think you are so rich as to be able to despise it. To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance. But if you despise these simple gospel things, you will come under the condemnation. "From him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath."

But, my friends, whilst as it respects our condition by nature, and the wants with which we are beset, we may say that all are extremely needy, and cannot live without this meat, we must go in search of those who are *spiritually needy* in their own estimation, in their own soul's experience, and where shall we find them? In the arms of electing love! Oh, the heart of Christ crucified having their names engraven on the breastplate of Him who pleads their cause within the vail. He goes in search of them effectually by the Holy Ghost, ministerially, by His anointed ministers, instrumentally, by the word of the truth of the gospel, committed to them to preach for the obedience of faith amongst all nations. Oh, how hard it is for us to escape from the crushing carnality of the times in which we live, and to get up into the pure region of gospel truth—*there* the atmosphere is holy! But amongst what commonly prevails in this land, the atmosphere is exceedingly gross, and thick, and those that have life cannot breathe freely, and so are obliged to make their escape.

The Spirit of God when He visits these creatures finds them as rich and full as their neighbours—full of vanity, full of conceit, full of worldliness, full of their professions, full of their prospects, full of what they promise themselves, and full of what is promised them by others. But, be they full of what they may, their

fulness is emptiness; their riches are poverty; their strength is weakness. But it needs the Spirit of God to awaken them to a discovery of this. No other can do it, but He will do it. He has never failed yet—many a strong sinner He has grappled with, long and tough may have been the contest: but in no one instance has He been baffled. His grace in the case of all His chosen is invincible grace. They are blind—but in the day of enlightening power, they are brought to see. They are proud—but in the day of humbling power, they are made humble. They are self-righteous—but in the day of sharp convictions, they are stripped of their self-righteousness. They are rebellious—but in the day of subduing power, however rebellious they may be, they are brought to submit. My people, ye members of this church, has He met you on the way? Has He grappled with you in His pity, in His love, and in His power? I ask not if you have struggled against Him, for you are strange creatures if you have not, but has He prevailed over you, in enlightening you in your need, in delivering you from your self-sufficiency, in bringing you out of your native darkness. Or, are you sinking into deeper than nature's darkness, by the resistance of spiritual light? The Spirit of God has a light that may be resisted. Wonderful light, powerful light, producing marvellous effects upon the character and life—but, observe, the grace that is *saving,* is irresistible. Have you been brought to some apprehension of your infinite need of this gracious operation of the Holy Ghost? Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are they that have an infinite need, so that an infinite gift is needed to supply that need. Are you poor enough this day, to need such rich supply? Are you low enough to need such lifting up as this? Are you empty enough, that you cannot do without such replenishing as this?

Secondly, He is one who has a spiritual appetite. We have all kinds of appetites. Some of them, however, not better than those of swine, and a great deal of them a vast deal worse. You may take offence at such comparisons, I think the brute animals are they that should take the offence; they suffer by the comparison—sinners cannot—for they are low and vile beyond

expression. You see the appetites coming out: "What shall we eat." "What shall we drink?" "Who will shew us any good?" "The love of money is the root of all evil." A thirst of drink makes beasts of all men. Where will you get a spiritual appetite? This is spiritual meat; it requires therefore in the eater, a spiritual appetite; the seat of this appetite is a renewed soul—you will not get it in a soul by nature, ransack it as you will, neither can you bring nature to it. You may bring it to an appearance of it, something like it, they may have a sense of need, they may have wishes, desires, prayers, they may appear in their own eyes, guilty, helpless, but they have no spiritual appetite, because they are destitute of that *living* principle which renewing grace implants in the soul; and in consequence of the implantation of which this spiritual appetite appears. Psalm lxiii. 1-2: "O God, Thou art my God; earnestly will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is. To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary." There is the spiritual appetite coming out. Psalm xxvii. 4: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple." *That* is the language of this appetite. This appetite comes and goes, though when once created, it can never be destroyed. Sometimes it is exceedingly feeble, the pulsation of it can hardly be perceived, so that those who are the subjects of it come to the conclusion that they never had it. But it needs only to be revived. A little wholesome medicine will relieve of temporary sickness that seizes on a believer, and bring him so far to health and cure that the Saviour may say, Set meat before him. Sometimes the appetite is very keen, it seems as if there were hardly any possibility of satisfying it, and the soul says: "Lord, it is good to be here, let us make three tents or tabernacles, so that the feast may be prolonged, it is so sweet." Doubtless in the upper room at the last passover, the disciples would say, it is good to be here; they never heard such sweet discourse. They were never in

a place, where perfumes came forth from the person so powerfully before; it is good to be here. But what if you had been there as a Judas? What if this place prove an upper room, where poor souls may catch something of the fragrance of Him who filled that place of old—but what if you catch nothing of that fragrance—what if you have not this spiritual appetite for spiritual meat. "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good.".

Thirdly, He hath this meat given to him. We live in a time when men can help themselves. But no; they add insult to injury, they wrong Eve in saying they can help themselves; but they insult His Majesty by saying He will help them because they help themselves: "We will do our part and God will do His." That is the keynote of the profession in this nation at the present day. There are few exceptions, and these are silently but surely fading away. Who shall live when God doeth thus? They only whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life—they only who cannot learn that bastard gospel of helping themselves. God writes a sentence of death upon every eater of this meat. He strikes him with paralysis in his nature, so that he becomes like Samson when shorn of his locks. It is a great matter to bring old nature to His place to strike him with paralysis, to make application of that word to him, and his powers: "Your strength is to sit still." But the Lord does not stop here, He paralyses grace too when one is going to eat this meat; so instead of being filled with light, you may have been filled with darkness. In place of being exercised in faith you may have been plagued with unbelief. Instead of sitting quietly under your own vine or fig tree, you may have been tossed with tempests. You may have been wanting to get a foretaste of good things, and you may have got nothing but wormwood and gall. A strange kind of emptiness, coldness, and deadness may have come over you; that is often the Lord's way of bringing men to be eaters of this wonderful meat. He is very jealous of their beginning to eat some old manna, that they have got; they are ready to be rubbing up old graces. When grace springs up into exercise they go forth with new life. Now the Lord knows how apt they are to make idols

of these things, to please themselves with this experience. Hence He paralyses the poor soul, even as respects His grace, so that the individual may look as if he were dead, and people may say, he is dead—you may look to see if there is any breathing, but no; you may feel to see if there be any heat, but no; it is just as cold as a corpse. You may look to see if there is any stirring, but no; but when Christ the Saviour comes with the Holy Ghost, and stretches Himself upon this individual, then the poor thing begins to sneeze, and life revives. He who was bound with innumerable chains is set in a large room, and walks at liberty, larger and sweeter than any he had had before. "For your shame you shall have double, for your confusion you shall rejoice in your portion:" That is His way of working. He is "wonderfull in counsel, and excellent in working." When He brings the soul into some exercise of grace, then He gives this meat. Some can take Christ when they please; just as the Philistines did with Dagon what they liked; they took him down and set him up showing that he was no god. So in our day there are idol Christs, whom people can take as they please. Not so the Christ of God. He is in the Father's keeping, under the Father's care. He is in His own keeping, under His own care. He is in the keeping of the Holy Ghost, under the care of the Holy Ghost. And although He should be given in a faithful ministry, in a clear gospel call, and though all things may be declared and ready, the soul finds it needs another *giving* before it can become an eater; it must be given with divine power in the application of the truth to the soul, reviving grace in the soul, to meet that good that is presented. Are you such helpless dependant creatures? "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly O beloved."

2. There is the eating of the meat.

This eating is of grace. Romans ix. 16: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." The Lord has to make the feast, and He makes it in His grace. The Lord provides the guests, and He provides them in His grace. The Lord has to take charge of the eating on the part of the guests, else they will make nothing of it. This

eating is of grace. Ephes. ii. 5, l.c.: "By grace ye are saved."

This eating is through faith. Far be it from our minds, to take in the carnal notion of physical mastication; as if in this matter men were to act like cannibals. We say this eating is of grace, but grace works in the way of faith. It is by faith that it might be by grace, or that it might appear to be of grace. Faith is peculiarly fitted to magnify grace, to illustrate its nature, demonstrating that what faith gets it gets by grace; what faith does, it does through grace; what faith enjoys, it enjoys by grace. It is by faith that it might be by grace, to cut off all occasion of glorifying on the part of the creature. Now faith, being a grace of the Spirit of God, and being in the soul a supernatural principle, carrying the man altogether above, and immeasurably beyond the power and reach of nature; it penetrates into the mysteries of the kingdom, apprehends the things set forth, and has a special eye to the person of Christ and to His undertaking to save sinners, His obedience unto death, and the glory that followed. John vi. 35 and 53: "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."

Firstly, This eating consists in apprehending the meat. Jesus Christ is set forth in the counsels of God. We have an extract of the counsels given us in the written word. The glorious gospel is that wherein, together with the sacraments, this meat is set forth. And this meat is set forth that it may be taken. "Take, eat." This is what we mean by saying that in this eating there is included an apprehending of the meat. The soul when it thus apprehends the meat is in the exercise of grace; just as the body acts its physical members when anyone lays hold of the food by which it is to be nourished. We cannot lay hold of a morsel of meat in ordinary cases without the acting of some member of the body. Now there is just one principle in the soul whereby this meat can be apprehended, that is the principle of

faith; but of course that principle must be in exercise. It being a grace of the Spirit of God, if the Spirit of God be not in the soul in active operation in the way of faith, there can be no apprehending of this meat, no receiving of Christ.

Secondly, There is an appropriating of it. Under what aspect is this meat set forth in the gospel? It is set forth as meat from heaven, it is the gift of God, that is so much. And it is set forth as meat for sinners; so that the inscription upon the meat may be said to be twofold; one pointing to Him who provides the meat; II. Cor. ix. 15: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And another inscription pointing to those for whom it is provided and who are welcome to receive it; who are clearly sinners of this world. God gives the meat in His love, and God gives the meat in His love to sinners. This is a peculiar kind of love that is manifested in the gift of Christ. "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son." There thus appears in the word, at any rate, however blind and insensible we may be to it, to be a making over of this meat, in a free, gracious proclamation to sinners of mankind. But one must read the proclamation that is made, one must enter into its import, and intention; one must credit what God testifies; one must meet Him at the point where He meets sinners. Here is work for the Holy Ghost, none else can accomplish it. John vi. 44 and 45: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." No man can read the love of God in the gift of Christ but with eyes anointed with divine eye salve. What Pelagians in the present day talk of as the love of God, is no love at all. They can read of it with unaffected minds, and in the midst of great swelling words of vanity, and full of carnal confidence. Whereas they that read it by the power of the Spirit of God do

it with broken hearts and glistening eyes; through the rainy cloud of repentance they behold the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the Son of God by faith. And when the soul thus reads God's love in the gift of this meat as given to sinners, then through grace it appropriates it; the meat is mine; that is the appropriating act of faith without which there can be no salvation. "My Lord and my God" was the exclamation of the faith of Thomas.

Thirdly, This eating includes a relishing of the meat. "He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." Old nature cannot come in sight of this. Spiritual gifts cannot bring to this in truth. Old nature cannot touch it, its arms are withered and it cannot stretch forth to it, and its old corrupt stomach repels it: it goes against the grain. Was it not so when He was amongst the Jews? They cried: "Away with Him, away with Him."

Why does He threaten to spue some people out of His mouth? Because they were contrary to His mind, and He was contrary to theirs. They are not heathens that He says He will spue out of His mouth, they are professed Christians. Let him that hath eyes to see, see; let him that hath ears to hear, hear. But where there is grace, and where grace is in exercise, there Christ is apprehended and appropriated, and there that word is made good: "My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." We now go on to notice:—

III. The effect produced by the eating of this meat. There are here two particulars to be illustrated;

1. The nature of this life.
2. How it is sustained.

1. The nature of this life.

1st. It is a life of nearness to God.

2nd. It is a life of acceptance with God.

3rd. It is a life of submission to the will of God.

4th. It is a life of zeal for the glory of God.

5th. It is a life of the enjoyment of God. Grace here, the beginning of glory; and glory hereafter, the consummation of grace.

2. How is it this life is sustained. It is sustained by Him who is the meat: "He shall live by Me."

"Preparation for Eternity"

(Preached 5th September, 1851).

MATTHEW XXV. 31-46: *"When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats,"* . . . . .

TO be prepared for the eternal world is the first and last lesson in the school of Christ. It runs through the whole of His Holy word, and it is distinctly impressed upon the parables which hold so prominent a place in the doctrines He taught. It is no doubt true, that it inculcates the necessity of constant watchfulness, but it is lest His disciples be taken by surprise by the summons to depart hence. He teaches the necessity of a faithful and diligent cultivation of the talents committed to their care, but it is with a special view to the return of their Master, who will call for a return at their hands, and give to every man according to his works. Now, what He so evidently teaches in the parables He spake, He lays before His disciples in plain and impressive terms, in the passage now read.

Verse 31: "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." This whole passage points to the judgment day. The scene it describes will then take place, and the procedure it presents before us will then go forward in all its weight and solemnity.

We are first of all introduced to the Judge. A remarkable title He bears: "The Son of Man." Still He is an infinitely exalted Person that bears this title. It is one which in infinite condescension He assumed: it did not originally and properly pertain to Him. It was by the mysterious step of the Incarnation that He who is, was and shall be, the Son of God, became the Son of Man. He acquired it by deep abasement, unparalleled ignominy, and inconceivable sorrow. The path which was to conduct Him to the title of Son of Man, with all the honours and prerogatives attached to it, lay through the Cross. "For the joy that was set before Him He endured the Cross, despising the shame," and so hath "authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man." He hath received the first-fruits of His glory as the Judge of all when in His human nature He ascended to heaven, and the Father said to Him, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." He must reign accordingly till all His enemies are subdued under Him: and the last enemy to be subdued is death: and after death comes the Judgment.

We have the manner in which the Judge will come: "In His glory." There is a glory essential, infinite, and eternal that belongs to Him originally. He is equal in power and glory with the Father: and this glory is His, and lies at the foundation of every other He possesses. But for this, He would not have been capable of receiving the glory that belongs to Him as Mediator. In the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ you see the proper basis of His office, His work, and His glory. All that is His as Son. Accordingly, they who err with regard to the glory of His person, err grievously with everything else concerning Him. The Jews looked upon Him as the son of Joseph. They could not therefore understand how He could give them His flesh to eat. And no man can by faith taste of the Lamb roasted with the fire of Divine justice for the deliverance of sinners, that hath not by faith of Divine operation caught something of the infinite glory of Him who is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

He hath received glory of the Father in human nature.

It was promised to Him, and He fulfilled the condition of the promise in the purchase of redemption for sinners: and this promise will reach its full accomplishment. There have been a few beams of this glory given to the children of men. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory: and His disciples believed on Him." There is somewhat of this glory manifested to every gracious soul. It is at this point that true Christian religion begins. We lost the sight of Divine glory when we turned away from the Creator in our apostacy: and it is needful, if we recover from this apostacy, that we recover the sight of this glory. It is to be seen in the face of Christ. When a man is born of God he is born into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Oh, have you ever pierced through the womb and been ushered into such a sight as this? A woe is yours, it awaits you at His coming, if this is not the case with you. Look to yourselves, men and brethren, "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Acts iii. 19: "Except repentance be granted you by the Holy Spirit ye shall all likewise perish." Mark: our sins dates from our loss of the sight of Divine glory: our salvation commences with the sight of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. From this point onward at intervals the gracious soul obtains glimpses of the glory of Jesus Christ: for that constitutes the life of the soul, its light, its strength, its freedom, its joy, its happiness. Accumulate upon it what you will, it is disposed to say, "All this avails me nothing so long as I see not the King's face." But let the soul see the King's face, and it is comparatively blessed and comfortable, amidst the sorest privations and bitterest sorrows. Know you aught of this secret? Are you in possession of anchorage that enables you to ride securely and permanently amidst the severest storms that overtake you? Are you in possession of a secret, the momentary absence of which causes desolation and sorrow to your soul in the midst of the greatest outward

plenty: and is that the glory of the Son of Man?

But this being just as the rays which the sun shines forth when about to rise, the hour is coming when the Son of Man shall come in His glory in a way which shall outstrip every appearance which has gone before. The Sun of righteousness will arise on a vast sphere suited to His Majesty: for the heavens and the earth shall not be able to stand the sight, they shall flee away. Oh sinners, how will you be able to stand? Where is the ground on which you will take up your position? What strength have you of soul or body to endure this magnificent sight? I tell you, you shall be there. These eyes will see the King's glory, whatever that means: and it means more than the highest Archangel can conceive. Oh be you prepared. Look around you for ground strong enough to bear you. Try the strength of it. The poor people of God are tried: the ground on which they stand is tried: earthquakes are sent to shake it. They feel sometimes as if it would go from beneath their feet, and they feel as if they would be into the sea of infidelity and downright atheism. But these trials are overruled by Him who holds them in His hand, and He appoints them for holy purposes. They go to strengthen the standing of His people, and to assure them that the foundation of God standeth sure. No other foundation will stand sure.

We have next a notice of His attendants. "The holy Angels." The angels are His, because He made them. I put it to you, what glory must belong to the Son of Man, who hath made these glorious spirits, clothes them with all the beauty they possess, and provides for them and communicates to them the happiness they enjoy. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." Every angel is a creature, not made without Jesus Christ. All the beauty in which angels shine is created beauty, and not without Jesus Christ. All the happiness that angels enjoy is created happiness: there is not a drop of it but owes its being to Jesus Christ. What a Christ is He! What a claim He hath upon your esteem and love! Give Him what is His due. You are robbers if you refuse, and you will be condemned and cast into hell as such if you

persist in refusing.

But Christ hath angels given unto Him as Mediator. The Father enjoins them to wait upon Him and do Him service: "And again, when He bringeth the first Begotten into the world, He saith, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him'." We find them ministering to Him in the days of His flesh, after His temptation, in His agony, preparatory to His resurrection. They are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: because they are members of His body, exceedingly dear to Him: because they are the purchase of His blood, called by His grace, inhabited by His Spirit: because in them He sees of the travail of His soul: through them He glorifies His Father just as He glorified Him in the work done for them: and therefore they are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

It is said here, "All the holy Angels." It is meet that on the occasion on which He is to appear in His proper character (for He veiled His glory here), it is meet that on the day on which He is to manifest the wealth that belongs to Him as Creator, when He shall gather of the fruit of His obedience unto death, He be seen with His proper attendants, surrounded by the retinue that pertains to Him. Oh what a sight it will be! Eminent saints have been like to fall as dead at the sight of one angel. Be you ready to admit that we could ill afford to stand the sight of such a glorious being. But you are called to prepare yourselves for a sight this world is wholly incapable of. "He shall come in His glory, and all the holy Angels with Him."

We have next the seat He will occupy. "He shall sit upon the throne of His glory," or, upon His glorious throne. The Throne of the Universe belongs to Him by original, and absolute right. "He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He claims the throne of universal power and authority. But it is not of this throne He speaks here, but of that which is appointed unto Him of His Father. It is in His capacity as Son of Man, as Mediator between God and man, as the Saviour of sinners, that He has the commission to judge, and has assigned to Him a glorious

throne that belongs to Him. The language is clearly figurative, taken from a custom which prevails amongst men. Those possessed of kingly authority and power, or who exercise the functions of judge, usually appear on great occasions seated on a chair becoming the majesty they wear, fitted to the office they fill, and answerable to the work for the performance of which they appear in public. But whilst it is figurative, it is very significant, and intimates to us that everything in the coming of the Son of Man to judge the world will be in keeping. There will be nothing whatever wanting, nothing out of place, nothing unseemly. And as the seat of judgment is a visible token of the right of Him who occupies it to exercise judgment: as it is fitted to strike awe into the minds of those summoned before Him, as it is calculated to convey in a visible form the truth that all will be done according to the rules of equity, so the appearance of the Son of Man will be such as to convey all these things.

Next we have the people to be judged.

Verses 32-33: "And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." It is the last judgment that is set: it is the great day of final retribution: so all generations of men that have lived upon the face of the earth are to appear on this day to take part in its procedure, and to be affected for eternity by its decision. We are scarcely able to grasp this vast appearing: the mind is ready to stagger beneath it as a burden too heavy for it to bear: and in the attempt of seizing upon too much, we run the risk of losing all. Each of you will be there. It is appointed to you to die, to leave this earth for the dark valley of the shadow of death. You are tenants here by the will of Him who made you and who placed you here. You know not when your lease will run out: it is getting shorter and shorter every day: and you must go hence. So you see one after another passing from this world into another. Whilst your spirits are called away and your bodies left to moulder in the dust, a time is appointed for their meeting again. Those so

closely united, now severed in the matter of death, shall be re-united in the morning of the resurrection: so that all, and you among the rest, must appear before the Son of Man.

Oh, what an eventful morning will that be in which the last trumpet will sound! How solemn the moment when its sound shall penetrate the bed on which you lie! How will you be occupied? In a way we cannot describe. It will be an awful hour to you, if you are strangers to Him who sits upon the throne. It will be an awful hour if you have died in this world, without interest in Him! Oh, my friends, it had been better for you never to have been born, than that you should come forth to the resurrection of damnation! A blessed morning it will be to you, if you come forth to the resurrection of life. But to one or other it must be. It is now for you to judge seriously and prayerfully which it is likely to be. Judge now, what will be your condition at this moment.

No sooner are they gathered before Him, than the Judge will preside. The first thing is to assign them to their several places. All is to be done as it is enjoined to be done in His church, decently and in order. It is needful that each take his place. This is His work. It is not left to angels, far less to men themselves. It is the Judge that will do it. He has all the knowledge requisite for this purpose: His judgment is unerring: His decision, therefore, will in every case be according to truth. At once, by a single glance, with irresistible power, He shall separate them one from another, and there will be no occasion for shifting places after. No individual will be found in the one who ought to appear in the other. It is compared to the readiness and accuracy with which a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: he knows them all by headmark. In like manner the Son of Man knows them all, though all nations are gathered together, and He knows them severally by headmark: and as readily, and with as much decision and fidelity, he distinguishes the one from the other, as doth a shepherd the sheep from the goats.

"He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left." The right hand is the place of

honour. It is so in a slight degree even amongst ourselves. In this the Judge already indicates the treatment they are severally to receive. The place tells of the judgment that is to be pronounced, as the judgment pronounced tells of their ultimate disposal. Now, which think you will be your place, on the right hand, or on the left?

The judgment proceeds.

Verse 34: "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Having assigned to them their proper places, He now speaks to them accordingly. Beginning with those on His right hand, He speaks to them in the language of favour, "Come." He addresses them by the highly honourable title, "Ye blessed of My Father." The Father is in Divine dispensations to be regarded as the primary fountain of all blessedness. The blessedness He gives out to you as His creatures hangs upon the good pleasure of His will, and may He not do with His own what He will? And if He gives to one, and withholds from another, may He not say to the other, "Is thine eye evil, because Mine is good?" Blessedness to the children of men springs from His mercy, because they are sinners in His sight. He knows them and judges them as sinners, and purposes to deal with them as sinners. He cannot do otherwise. It is impossible for Him to do otherwise. Yet it is a delusion deeply rooted in the heart by nature, and nothing but omnipotent grace can root it out, that men may have peace though they walk after their own ways: and under that delusion men lie down in carnal security and roll like swine. But when God breaks in with saving light upon a soul, that soul is brought to be of one mind with Him. Is it so with you? Hath the Spirit of all grace by the word of the truth of the gospel, engraven on your souls, inwrought into your daily experience that God knows you as sinners, judges you as sinners, and cannot deal with you but as sinners. There is no basis for redemption work without these truths. He finds a Surety. Where is the need of a surety if there are no sinners? He causes to meet on the head of the Surety

the iniquities of them all. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief." Why so, unless He who knew no sin, was made sin for them who knew no righteousness? Whether you look at the character of God as revealed in His word, or at His holy, just, and good law, or at the Cross of Christ, and what took place there, then you will read in most legible terms that He will by no means clear the guilty. It is of His mercy that any of the children of men are blessed. It is of sovereign mercy: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." They are blessed in their eternal election to be subjects of mercy: they are blessed in their eternal redemption of Christ bought for them: they are blessed in the application of that redemption by the regeneration of the Holy Ghost: they are blessed in their being made meet for the inheritance: they are blessed in the inheritance being prepared for them: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

They have a title to this kingdom. An heir differs essentially from every other possessor of an inheritance. It is a peculiar kind of possession. Yet this is the possession to which those blessed of Christ's Father are invited. They are called to realize their title. Here they may have questioned it and not infrequently concluded they have no title to it whatever: not a few of them have spoken as if they were on the verge of the bottomless pit when they were very near to glory. Some of them have departed, to the amazement of bystanders, as if they were sinking to hell, when about to be carried to Abraham's bosom. How precious to them to be called upon by the Son of Man as Judge, under the apellation of "blessed," to inherit, that is, to realise their clear, solid, unquestionable title to that kingdom. They are called to take possession of it fully, and for ever to enjoy it. It is a "kingdom," a goodly inheritance, very extensive, abundantly replenished: it is prepared for them from all eternity. We need not wonder that eternity is appointed to them for the enjoyment of the inheritance, seeing that from eternity it was prepared for them. It will have no end: it had no beginning.

Verses 35, 36: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave

Me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." This is what He judges they did. But is it because of merit by so doing that they are pronounced blessed? No. In one respect their title to the inheritance is of pure love, undeserved favour, all of grace. In another view it is a purchased possession. But in the purchase of it the Father provided the price: He spared not His only Son. It was freely bestowed. "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." Where is there any room whatever for the claim of merit on behalf of those for whom this kingdom is prepared? How then are we to understand this "For"? We are to regard it as an evidence. They were called by His grace, vitally united to Christ, and interested in His purchased redemption. We are to look to it as a reward reckoned of grace, not of debt. It was a grace that enabled them to do what is here recorded.

What will the righteous say to all this?

Verses 37 to 40: "Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? Or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger and took Thee in? Or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." This is their character, exceedingly suitable to the spirit they breathe. They are an humble people, and very seldom able to see anything about themselves why they should be spoken to in such terms. They make little account of what they do: they are more taken up with their sins and shortcomings than with what they do. What will the Judge be able to say to you? "Blessed of My Father"? Do you know anything of that language? Have you ever heard it from His lips? Are you pleased to hear it from Him? Are you not content without it? Do you enquire if it be possible He can address you in such language? Do you cast yourselves upon sovereign mercy? How stand you affected towards Jesus Christ

and His poor members? Can you adduce any claims of substantial deeds of benevolence done to Christ's poor members, out of regard to Him as their Head, from perceiving, or thinking you perceive, the lineaments of His lovely image in their character? It is an easy thing to feed the hungry, and so on. It is not so easy to do any of these to Christ's poor members out of regard to Christ, from observing their likeness to Him. It needs spiritual discernment: you must discriminate between the image of Christ and the image of the devil: it needs spiritual taste: you must have a liking to the image of Christ, and a hatred to the image of the devil. It needs patient forbearance: for the devil seeks to confound all distinctions. Small is the love of any man to a Christian, acknowledged to be such, unless he can endure the trials to which a Christian is subjected. If you find it easy to do deeds of benevolence, you have reason to suspect them.

Verse 41: "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and His angels." He speaks to those on the left hand in the language of condemnation: instead of inviting them to come, He tells them to depart. Very awful is the apellation under which He addresses them: "Ye cursed," He does not say of whom. Why? Perhaps the reason is, they are cursed absolutely. Sometimes they say, "Though we are cursed of God, we are blessed by another: though we are cursed by everybody else, we are blessed by ourselves: though we are cursed by one church, we are blessed by another. "But look at this: Cursed of God, cursed of the angels, of devils, of wicked men, of yourselves: covered with shame and everlasting confusion: and no relief, no support, no countenance afforded you. Why cursed? For your sin. No thing brings a curse but sin. What a fearful thing sin must be when it brings upon creatures such a heavy weight as this.

Whither are they to depart? "Into everlasting fire." A devouring element, conveying the idea of fearful destruction; gnawing, yet never ceasing to gnaw: devouring, yet never ceasing to devour: destroying, yet never ceasing to destroy.

How came this fire? "Prepared for the Devil and his angels." Oh what an awful thing to have your soul's dwelling-place with the Devil and his angels? But is it not righteous? You were led captive by the devil at his will, and did his polluted work, and you must share with him in his punishment.

What have they done? Verses 42-43: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not."

But look at the self-conceit of these people.

Verse 44: "Then shall they also answer Him saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?"

Verse 45: "Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto Me." There is no mention of lying, thieving, malignant feelings, drunkenness, slandering, bad tempers, passions, hot words, injustices, oppression. No. They did not minister to Christ's poor members. "Depart from Me." Is not the law exceedingly broad? "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." The sentence takes effect.

Verse 46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."